CHRISTUS AUCTOR

A MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

WARREN A. CANDLER

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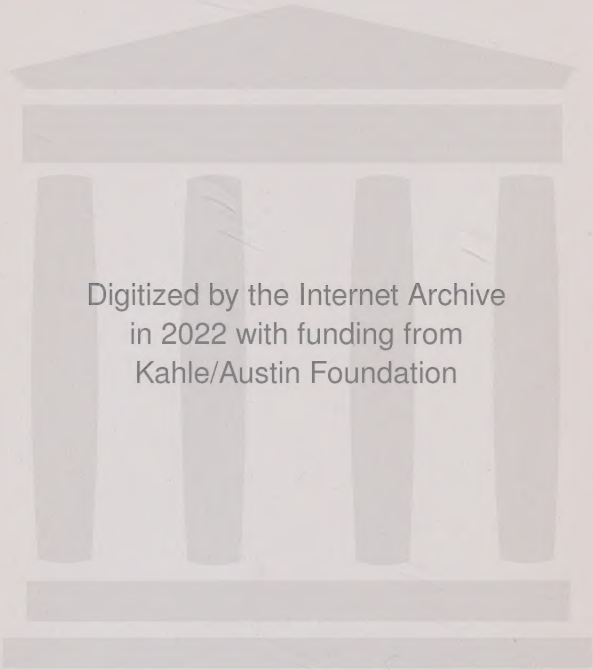
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BY

WARREN A. CANDLER, D.D., LL.D.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	1-8
I.	CHRISTIANITY OFFERS CREDENTIALS. THE EVIDENCES. THE REASONABLE USE OF REASON	9-16
II.	ASSUMING THE EXISTENCE OF A GOD, THE ANTECEDENT PROBABILITY OF A REVELATION	17-28
III.	IS THERE A GOD? ATHEISM, AGNOSTICISM, DEISM, PANTHEISM AND REVEALED RELIGION	29-38
IV.	HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? IS JESUS A MYTH?	39-56
V.	HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? IS THE JESUS OF THE EVANGELISTS DIVINE?	57-68
VI.	HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD? ST. PAUL'S TESTIMONY	69-88
VII.	ST. PAUL'S TESTIMONY CONTINUED AND ITS CORROBORATION BY THE EXISTENCE OF THE CHURCH AND BY THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY	89-104
VIII.	HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD? THE TESTIMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS .	105-124

IX. Has God Appeared Among Men? The Witness of History to the Divinity of Jesus 125-148

X. When God Was Among Men Did He Approve Any Sacred Books? The Witness of Jesus to the Old Testament 149-174

XI. When God Was Among Men Did He Provide for Additional Sacred Books? What Authority Does the New Testament Derive from Jesus? 175-206

XII. Have the Sacred Books Authenticated by God When He Was Among Men Reached Us in a Substantially Uncorrupted State? . 207-226

XIII. Is the Imprint of God Upon the Book Authenticated by Jesus? The Internal Evidences of the Divine Origin of the Bible 227-240

XIV. The Conclusion 241-250

INTRODUCTION

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—*St. Jude.*

"Stand fast in the faith."—*St. Paul to the Corinthians.*

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."—*St. Paul to the Ephesians.*

"Nor will the Higher Criticism disturb the conclusion of our common sense. It has run its course and perished in the counter-currents of its own antagonisms. Acids and alkalies of hostile theories have neutralized each other. Opposing electrical forces have adjusted themselves into equilibrium. The sky is cleared by its own violence, and we may once more discern plain truth by plain reason."—*John McDowell Leavitt.*

INTRODUCTION

Blaise Pascal in his *Pensées* has left fragmentary materials for an apologetic treatment of Christianity, which he hoped to have made the work of his life. For so great a task he declared ten healthy years were required, while God had given to him only four sick ones.

For more than twenty years, as the writer of these lines has had opportunity, he has pondered the Evidences of Christianity and studied many of the masterpieces of the literature of the subject. But they have been busy years, crowded with toil and care, which denied him the leisure, if he had possessed the capacity, required for attaining the learning necessary to a just presentation of even the outlines of the great argument.

From the standpoint of an amateur in apologetics, however, he has felt the need of a treatise in which the Evidences of Christianity should be presented in a different form from that of any with which he was acquainted. The older writers have seemed to take too much for granted, and besides, since their days the field of controversy has been entirely changed. Not a few of the modern writers, on the other hand,

have appeared to grant too much and to make concessions to rationalism which may be justly regarded as scarcely less than betrayals of truth.

This modern policy of concessions to rationalism, made in the interest of what has been called "a distressed faith,"[1] is unwise and unnecessary. It must be resisted and reversed, or a devouring criticism, having mutilated and mangled the Holy Scriptures, "the Oracles of God," will presently proceed to an attempt to discrown and dethrone even the very Christ of the Prophets and Apostles himself. For, as Bishop Ellicott truly forewarns the Christian world, "The same spirit that has found irreconcilable difficulties in the supernatural element of the Old Testament will ultimately challenge the evidence on which the Incarnation rests. And the more so as all the age-long testimonies of the Old Testament, all the foreshadowings of all the promises that were greeted from afar, all the sure words of prophecy, will have been explained away; and there will remain nothing save two narratives, which, it will be said, bear so patently the traces of illusion, or, at the least, of an idealism expressing itself under the guise of alleged facts, that the doctrine of the Word become flesh, the doctrine which is the hope,

[1] Ellicott's "Christus Comprobator," page 11.

light and life of the universe will be surrendered to the last demands of what will have now become not a distressed, but a ruined faith. When that blessed doctrine is surrendered, the total eclipse of faith will have commenced and the shadows of the great darkness will be fast sweeping over the forlorn and desolate soul."[2]

Already indeed a tendency is observed in certain quarters "to minimize the knowledge of our Lord in His human nature,"[3] and to set up a plea of nescience for Him in order to offset his testimony to the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures, to the end that the assumptions of a destructive criticism may not be embarrassed by open and undisguised conflict with Him while still calling him Lord.

Against all this mistaken movement of theological compromise a firm stand must be made, if a shred of Christianity is to be left for transmission to the generations to come, or even if the faith of the present generation is to be maintained. At this present moment over wide areas of Christendom there are visible the characteristic parasites of a dying religion—mistletoe growths, such as Mormonism, Spiritualism, and Christian Science. Unless the

[2]"Christus Comprobator," page 31.
[3]Ibid., pages 85-96 and 97.

influence of recent "destructive criticism" is speedily overcome the Christian world must prepare for an age of the most grotesque superstitions. It can not return to paganism—the gods of the heathen world are dead beyond the hope of resurrection. But after it has renounced the guidance of the Bible, it will be forced to follow the lead of a blind but deathless instinct of religion into an era of ghosts and goblins. When the God of Samuel has been forgotten, having been dissolved in precipitate and corrosive speculations of "redactions" and "redactors," the witch of Endor will be resorted to, or mayhap multitudes will fly to the superstition of an infallible Pope, to whom John Henry Newman fled in order to down the spectres of his own raising. When in riotous rationalism Christendom has wasted the substance of a rich revelation inherited from the ages past, the prodigal will awake amid a famine—"a famine not of bread, but of hearing the words of the Lord"—and will be forced to starve, or to join himself to some citizen of the far land whither he has heedlessly wandered.

Forefending against a calamity so great, a stand must be made around the person of Jesus. His authority must be made the bulwark of the faith "once (*once for all*) delivered to

the saints." As the Reverend Principal Cairns has truly said: "In the great struggle between faith and doubt the key of the position is the person of Christ himself, and so long as the obvious meaning of the Gospel narrative as to the life, character and work of that central figure can be accepted 'as fact and not delusion,' no weapon lifted against Christianity can prevail."[4] Jesus is the true Defender of the Faith. He is the refuge of Truth in this "age of doubt," as he hath been its "dwelling place in all generations."

From the standpoint of this confident belief have been written the pages which follow. No claim of originality is made for what is contained in them. Most of it can be found scattered throughout the apologetic literature of our own and other lands. It is, however, here brought together in a form of argument not hitherto adopted by the evidence writers, as far as the present writer is acquainted with them. The strength of the discussion is in the method of its structure, and not in the originality of its materials.

It is put forth in the hope that it may steady the faith of some and restore the confidence of other wavering souls, and thus honor Him

[4] "Christ the Central Evidence of Christianity," page 1, in "Present Day Tracts," Vol. I.

"whom the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets and the noble army of the Martyrs praise; whom the Holy Church throughout the world doth acknowledge; who is the King of glory, the Everlasting Son of the Father." Unto Him be glory and power and dominion "throughout all the generations of the ages of the ages!"

I

CHRISTIANITY OFFERS CREDENTIALS. THE EVIDENCES. THE REASONABLE USE OF REASON

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—*St. Paul.*

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."—*St. John.*

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"—*Zophar the Naamathite.*

"We must enlarge our mind to the magnitude of divine mysteries, not limit them to the narrowness of our understanding."—*Lord Bacon.*

"The last step of reason is to perceive that there are infinitely many things which surpass her; and if she does not attain this knowledge, she is weak indeed!"—*Pascal.*

"The whole compass and system of the Christian Evidences unquestionably has nothing like it, nor approaching to it in the annals of the world. It is a phenomenon standing alone."—*Davison.*

I

Christianity Offers Credentials. The Evidences. The Reasonable Use of Reason.

Christianity alone of all the religions which have challenged the faith of man approaches him as a reasonable being, offering credentials of divine authority when demanding his submission. There are Evidences of Christianity, but there are no Evidences of Buddhism, Brahminism, or Mohammedanism.

The Evidences of Christianity are the proofs by which its claims to be accepted as the revelation of the only true God are attested.

Evidences appeal to reason, and Christianity submits its Credentials to the scrutiny of reason, insisting that the investigation of its claims shall be carefully and even severely conducted. It would not have men renounce the use of this God-given faculty in dealing with the highest and most solemn interest of life—religion. On the contrary, it demands that men shall employ reason, that spurious revelations may be exposed, the true faith established, and the genuine revelation correctly interpreted.

But while demanding the use of reason, Christianity insists that reason shall not be used unreasonably. In seeking to ascertain if God has made a revelation to man, and if so, what that revelation means, investigation can not be too severe. In determining this great question of fact, no room must be left for delusion or fraud. But in settling this question the credentials and not the contents of the revelation are under consideration. The hypothesis of a revelation is, that it is given to impart knowledge which the unaided reason is unable to discover. It begins where reason falters and fails. "It is therefore to be expected that it should communicate some truths not to be fully comprehended by the human understanding. But these we may safely receive upon the authority which declares them without danger of violating truth."[1] "We have a right to sit in judgment over the credentials of heaven's ambassador, but we have no right to sit in judgment over the information he gives us."[2] It is an unreasonable use of reason to reject a revelation in whole or in part, because its contents do not accord with some *a priori* notion of what it ought or ought not to contain.

[1] "Theological Institutes," by Richard Watson, Vol. I., page 113.

[2] Chalmers's "Evidences of Christianity," Vol. II., page 445.

Before the authority of reason may be justly allowed so enormous an extension it should be shown that the human mind is able to construct a philosophy of the Infinite, and formulate an ethical system perfect enough to test divine purity. But if human intelligence were competent to achieve successfully so great a task the necessity of a revelation would not exist. If such were its power, long ago men by searching would have found out God, and without a word from above they would have known the Almighty to perfection. But the human reason has no such power. Such use of it is unreasonable, for it makes the human mind the standard of the possible, the true and the good, and that too in the very moment of its confession of weakness and insufficiency. Such a use of reason is "as absurd as a man's making his visible horizon the limit of space."[3]

To the contents of a revelation human reason may not do more than apply the general tests of natural theology, viz.: that the revelation be consistent with itself and with the axioms of thought within which mental life and action are possible at all; that it be not immoral but consistent with the ends of holiness, for which only a revelation can be conceived to exist; that it

[3]Charles Hodges's "Systematic Theology," Vol. I., page 50.

be adapted to the wants of man as a free, moral agent, not commanding his obedience without sufficient evidence that the command is from heaven, nor constraining his obedience by coercive proofs that would leave no room for freedom of thought and of action. These general criteria Reason is under the most solemn obligations to Truth to apply with the utmost care and caution. Before by these tests it denounces a revelation as absurd, immoral or superstitious, it must be sure that its attitude is entirely judicial, and not that of a defendant in the dock pleading against the jurisdiction of the court and the validity of the law which threatens his condemnation. All disturbing influences arising from intellectual pride, mental waywardness, or moral eccentricity must be severely excluded while the credentials of that which claims to be a message from heaven are scrutinized.

The office of reason in religion we conclude is to determine the following questions, and these only: 1. Has a Revelation come from God? 2. If so, where is it? 3. Having found it, what is its real meaning?

In the settlement of these questions the processes of reason can not be too severe or too painstaking. These matters are issues of life and death. They affect the life that now is

and that which is to come. They touch duty and destiny. They are too great for trifling, too far-reaching for man to incur any risks of mistake by renouncing reason, or by employing reason unreasonably. On the peril of his life he must pass upon them reverently, seriously, sincerely, and settle them for time and for eternity.

He can not after the manner of the Romanists transfer this responsibility to an Infallible Pope or to Infallible Councils. They are but men as he is a man. No sanctification, or ordination, or aggregation, of fallibility can ever produce infallibility. Every soul must bear its own responsibility, and enjoy its own freedom. There is no room for the office of an attorney between any man and God. Every man must find and accept God's truth for himself.

On the other hand, he can not after the manner of the Rationalists undertake to revise God's revelation, or to reject it, because of any preconceptions of his own. He must settle these great questions of fact upon the evidence which lies before him. If he finds as a matter of fact that God has made a revelation, he must obediently receive it, and he must reverently seek the true interpretation of it. He must earnestly inquire, has God made a revelation? Where is it? What does it mean?

The last of these questions belongs to the science of interpretation—Hermeneutics—with which the pending discussion is not concerned. The first two includes all that is involved in the Evidences of Christianity—Apologetics—and are the matters considered in the investigation which follows.

II

ASSUMING THE EXISTENCE OF A GOD, THE ANTECEDENT PROBABILITY OF A REVELATION

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—*Psalmist.*

"O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down!"—*Isaiah.*

"Oh that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his seat. . . . Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I can not perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I can not behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand that I can not see him: but he knoweth the way that I take."—*Job.*

"If He has, or rather is a Heart; if the moral qualities which are discoverable in ourselves have any transcendent and majestic counterpart in Him; then supposing the question whether he has given a revelation to be for us still unanswered, or even unexamined, we do well to traverse all the corridors of history, to take counsel with the current wisdom and experience of the living, and to cross-question the recorded convictions of the dead, until we see reason to hope that a solution is at last at hand; until 'the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts.' "—*Canon Liddon.*

II

Assuming the Existence of a God, the Antecedent Probability of a Revelation.

There is no God; there is a God, but He has made no revelation of Himself to man; there is a God and He has made a revelation of Himself to man. The foregoing are all the hypotheses possible to the human mind on the subject of God and a divine revelation. The alternatives of thought are therefore some form of Atheism, Deism, Pantheism or Revealed Religion. No account need be taken of any phase of Agnosticism, for it excludes itself from consideration at this stage of the discussion by its non-committal attitude on the question of the divine existence. We are assuming the existence of a God—which Agnosticism affirms is unknown and unknowable.

For the present we assume there is a God, and raise the question, Is it probable that he has made a revelation of himself to man?

All the forces of Deism and Pantheism, by whatsoever name called, answer with one accord, No. Is this answer reasonable?

If we think of God at all we must think of Him as infinitely powerful and infinitely good.

Impotence or evil we can not attribute to Him by whom all things were made and do now exist. But if He is both good and powerful He will not leave such a creature as man without all the light required for life and happiness. In the benevolence of God and the needs of man lies the antecedent probability of a revelation. As Canon Liddon says, most truly: "If we really believe God to be a Moral Being, we shall be prepared to find that he has spoken to us. The strength of the confidence with which we anticipate a revelation will vary exactly with our faith in the morality of God."[1] And Atheism is less repugnant to reason than belief in an immoral God, or in a God morally neutral. It is more reasonable to believe that there is no God, than to believe that there is a God, and that he has left such a being as man, beset with the circumstances of sin and pain and death, without a word of guidance amid conditions so tragic and so perplexing. Man's origin, duty and destiny present problems, the solution of which vitally affects his welfare, but lies quite beyond his natural powers.

God's creatures of the lower orders, the brutes, having instinct to guide them, and being incapable of the sin and suffering possible to man, do not need and could not receive a di-

[1] "Some Elements of Religion," page 205.

vine revelation. That they are without such supernatural guidance does not impeach the divine goodness. But man is appointed to a higher and more perilous position. To him is given the lofty and dangerous faculty of free agency, with all the possibilities of dreadful failure or glorious success. To him light from above is as needful as the air is to the fowls that fly, or as the water is to whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. If he be left without a revelation from God, no argument can clear his Maker of the charge of cruelty. Deism, which claims that there is a God but he has not revealed himself, puts an "immeasurably greater strain upon faith"[2] than Christianity with all its miracles. And the attitude of Pantheism as to a revelation of God is essentially the same as that of Deism, with this difference, that the latter believes in a silent God outside the world, "banished" from his creation, while the former claims a dumb God, who is "only a fine name for the universe,"[3] beneath which he is "buried." Human nature and human needs cry out against such gods.

But it may be asked, Is an objective revelation necessary for man, and is the necessity for it such as to create the presumption that it has

[2]"The Foundations of Faith," by Rev. Henry Wace, A.M., page 58.

[3]Liddon's "Some Elements of Religion," pages 63-68.

been given? Is a written revelation probable? May not reason, conscience, the light of nature, and the divine influence which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, be sufficient to meet his needs? Men have been in the world certainly as long as sixty centuries, sinning, suffering and dying, and most of them have had no written revelation during all that time. Not less than twenty-five hundred years of the age of man elapsed before the books of Moses and Job were written. If a written revelation is necessary, why was its beginning so long delayed, and why was it not given in full at the outset? Why is the written revelation not universal? Why should millions sit in the region and shadow of death waiting for the light to reach them by the tardy compassion of the favored nations to whom were first committed the oracles of God?

A perfect answer to all these questions it is not possible to give. Such knowledge is too high for us. It is enough to say that the analogies of Nature would lead us to expect a revelation to be given to some in trust for the benefit of all. There is no equality of gifts, natural or supernatural. High ends of benevolence and brotherhood are doubtless served by sending the greatest blessings to *all* men by the hands of *some* men. Moreover, the purpose and

plan involved in the existence of free moral agency must not be set aside by the method of a revelation, since the only object of a revelation is the moral well-being of the race. The means must be shaped to accomplish, and not to defeat, its own end. The question is not what God can do in the abstract, but what He can do in dealing with a free agent, having purposed that creation should reach its goal in virtuous free agency. The hypothesis of the divine goodness and the divine omnipotence does not require a method of revelation that should be best for some possible being. It requires the best form of revelation for the actual being, Man. A good God must not only give to his child, Man, light, but he must give the best light in the best way, Man being such a creature as he is.

There are but three methods which God could adopt in making a revelation to man: 1. Reveal himself independently to each man. 2. Reveal himself to one or more men, and have the revelation transmitted to all others orally. 3. Or make a revelation and transmit it from the few to the many by written as well as spoken words. Which is the best?

If God should adopt exclusively the first method, he must reveal himself to each man by unmiraculous suggestion and influence, or ap-

proach every man with impressive phenomena attesting the immediate presence of Deity. If the revelation were given by unmiraculous suggestion it would incur the peril of being unheard and unheeded. Moreover, since in such a case every man would hear for himself alone, with no other eye to see the divine presence, and no other ear to hear the divine voice, depravity might without the fear of detection report falsely the divine utterance. Presently the world would be filled with contradictory revelations, mutually destructive, and every vestige of true religion would be swept away by a flood worse than all the polytheisms of the ages. By such a method men would invert the confusion of tongues at Babel, and confound the speech of Deity. God himself would be made to appear polyglot, and monotheism would give place to polytheism. No fair tower of faith between heaven and earth would then be possible, nor city of God among men. A revelation to be of any use must be public, not private and personal.

On the other hand, if the divine approach to each man were publicly attested by miraculous manifestations, theophanies would become so common and universal that they would cease to have any power to impress man or attest the divine Word. Or they would come with such

manifold terrors as to overpower the will and destroy free agency. In either case all the *ends* of revelation would be defeated by the *method* of revelation.

Clearly, therefore, the needs of man fix the method of divine revelation. Mercy to all requires that the revelation be given to the few, and the solemn obligation of giving it uncorrupted to the many be laid upon the men who receive the divine communications. It is equally clear that human instinct, as well as divine impulsion, would inevitably lead to the committing of these revelations to writing. The piety that would commend one to God as a proper medium for a revelation, as well as the divine authority which gave the revelation, would forbid exposing the heavenly word to the chances of oral tradition. The degenerate faiths among men to-day witness to the student of comparative theology how ineffectual is tradition to preserve the Word of the Lord against human corruptions. The common rule of evidence, which excludes hearsay testimony, points to the unreliability of statements transmitted by word of mouth, and shows how little authority a revelation resting exclusively on tradition would have among men.

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"The man with a book" is looked for and longed for in all lands. This universal demand

for a written revelation has produced the almost universal supply which we see in the Zend-Avestas, Vedas, Korans and Bibles of the world. The contribution by the Jews of their sacred books, their only contribution to the permanent possessions of the race, has set them apart among the nations in sublime singularity as a "lonely people with their lonely book." And the majestic purity of their faith amid world-wide superstition attests the superior value and power of a written revelation over all oral tradition.

From the foregoing considerations, the dogma of Deism, that God has not made a revelation to man, does not seem reasonable. The presumptions of reason arising from man's needs and God's goodness are all against it. Assuming the existence of a God, the antecedent probabilities lead us to expect that somewhere and some-when he has made a revelation to man, and that it has been committed to writing. None but a "book religion" seems to satisfy the requirements of man's need. To use the clear, cogent words of a learned theologian: "The presumptions in favor of a divine revelation extend to its commitment to writing. No one would trust an important communication, designed for all men and all time, to uncertain oral tradition. Everybody knows how un-

trustworthy are all unwritten anecdotes and *memorabilia*. How few of the reputed sayings and acts of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and the Apostles, outside of the Scriptures have come down to our times, and there is not one of them entitled to credit! We should therefore naturally expect that if God revealed his will to prophets and evangelists, he would instruct them not only to make oral communications of them to the people of their own age, but also to commit them to writing, under the infallible superintendence of the same Power by whom they were revealed. Unless a constant miracle were wrought to keep the truth alive in the world, and preserve it unalloyed with error, its commitment to writing is the only conceivable method by which this end can be secured."[4]

But once the truth is committed to writing, and the writing has been accepted as a revelation from heaven, no miracle will be required to preserve it from corruption or from perishing. Pious zeal may be relied upon to multiply copies of it, and an unmiraculous Providence may be trusted to protect the work of the consecrated zeal to which has been entrusted the miraculous communication. The God of Providence and

[4]Dr. Thomas O. Summers's "Systematic Theology," page 438.

the God of Inspiration are not two Gods, but one, and we may be sure the one true God will not in his providential government of the world abandon the work of his own hands. His Supernatural Book will be the subject of his peculiar care. Nor will He need the extraordinary means of miracle to preserve it. Miracle He will use to attest it in its origin, but the faith and love which it calls forth, together with his providential oversight, will be sufficient for its perpetuation. Hereby it will be so fixed that though heaven and earth pass away it will not pass.

III

IS THERE A GOD?

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal power and Godhead."—*St. Paul.*

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."—*David.*

"For in Him we live and move and have our being."—*From St. Paul's address on Mar's Hill.*

"That God is, all nature cries aloud."—*Cato.*

"So far is it from being true that the explanation of phenomena by natural causes leads us away from God and His Providence, that those philosophers who have passed their lives in discovering such causes can find nothing that affords a final explanation without having recourse to God and His Providence."—*Lord Bacon.*

III

Is There a God?

Unless we accept philosophical scepticism and deny the possibility of all knowledge of every sort, we know that we are, and that the universe around us has a real existence. Ourselves and all things demand an explanation of their being, and we are compelled to give one of three explanations: (1) Matter and mind, as we know them, are Eternal; (2) Or they are the last effect of an infinite regression of causes; (3) Or there is a great First Cause from which all things have issued.

It will be observed that the conceptions of the Infinite and the Eternal are involved in each and all of the three hypotheses from which we are forced by the laws of thought to select an explanation of the problem of being. It has been often assumed that religion—especially revealed religion—is chargeable with having originated the conception of the Eternal and must alone bear the burden of vindicating the validity of the notion. But this assumption is erroneous. The conception of the Eternal, the Absolute, the Unconditioned, is a necessity of Reason, and can not be escaped by

renouncing religion and substituting the terminology of philosophy for the name of God. Men may choose between various theories of the Eternal but they may not rid themselves of the conception of Eternity altogether. As the perception of body compels the idea of space to arise, the perception of the succession of events compels the notion of time—the notion of infinite time, eternity.

Which, then, of the three theories, from which we must choose in giving an account of our own existence and the existence of all things known to us, is the most reasonable? Which solves the problem of Being most satisfactorily?

Are men and things kaleidoscopic manifestations of Eternal, Self-Existent Matter? Every impression of Sense and Consciousness leads to the denial of this hypothesis. Nor does scientific investigation lead to a different conclusion. Common observation and scientific research alike declare that every object in the universe cognizable by the senses has had a beginning in time. "The most powerful, penetrating and delicate instruments devised to assist our senses reach no cause which is not obviously also an effect. The progress of science has not more convincingly and completely disproved the once prevalent notion that the universe was created about six thousand

years ago, than it has convincingly and completely established that everything of which our senses inform us has had a beginning in time, and is of a compound, derivative and dependent nature. It is not long since men had no means of proving that the rocks, for example, were not as old as the earth itself—no direct means of proving even that they were not Eternal; but geological science is now able to tell us with confidence under what conditions, in what order, and in what epochs of time they were formed. We have probably a more satisfactory knowledge of the formation of the coal measures than of the establishment of the feudal system. We know that the Alps, although they look as if they have stood forever, are not even old, as geologists count age. The morning and night, the origin and disappearance of the countless species of living things which have peopled the Earth from the enormously remote times when the rocks of the Laurentian period were deposited down to the births and deaths of contemporaneous animals, have been again brought into the light of day by the power of Science. The limits of research are not even there reached, and with bold flight Science passes beyond the confines of discovered life—beyond the epochs of the formation even of the oldest rocks—to a time when there

was no distinction of Earth and Sea and Atmosphere, as all were mingled together in nebulous matter, in some sort of fluid or mist or steam; yea, onwards to a time when our Earth had no separate existence, and Suns, Moons and Stars were not yet divided and arranged into systems. If we seek, then, after what is Eternal, science tells us that it is not the earth nor anything which it contains, not the sea nor the living things within it, not the moving air, not the Sun, nor the Moon, nor the Stars."[1]

This eloquent and invincible argument of Prof. Flint is not less emphatic and conclusive than the words of Prof. Clerk-Maxwell: "None of the processes of nature, since the time when nature began, have produced the slightest difference in the properties of any molecule. We are therefore unable to ascribe either the existence of the molecules or the identity of their properties to the operation of any of the causes which we call natural. On the other hand, the exact quality of each molecule to all others of the same kind gives it, as Sir John Herschel has well said, the essential character of a manufactured article, and precludes the idea of its being eternal and self-existent."[2]

[1] Flint's "Theism," pages 102, 103.

[2] From address before the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1870.

The mind utterly refuses to believe matter self-existent. The hypothesis is unthinkable. Nor can reason be satisfied by referring the present order to causes back of it and these causes in turn back upon other causes, and so on through an infinite series. Prof. Flint well says: "The human mind universally and instantaneously rejects it as inconceivable, unthinkable, self-contradictory, absurd. We may believe either in a self-existent God or a self-existent World, and must believe in one or the other; we can not believe in an infinite regress of causes. The alternatives of a self-existent cause, and an infinite regress of causes, are not, as some would represent, equally credible alternatives. The one is an indubitable truth, the other is a manifest absurdity. The one all men believe, the other no man believes."[3]

The validity of this argument is in nowise impaired by the modern theories of Evolution. Let us travel over whatsoever distance we may, scrutinizing the various links in the chain, we must finally reach a link which is fastened to a Self-Existent Cause. We may call that Cause by whatsoever name we will, God or Protoplasm; It, or He, is worthy of our worship, and must command our reverence.

What or who is this First Cause?

[3]Flint's "Theism," page 120.

Nature is a unit. The very word, universe, implies this. All knowledge of nature confirms the view. The First Cause must therefore have attributes which no two or more beings can possess. All nature when correctly interpreted repudiates dualism and polytheism. The Voice of the Universe cries in unison with the Voice of Revelation, "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord."

In nature there is life and mind. An effect can never contain an element superior to its cause. The First Cause therefore must be a living and intelligent Cause.

The First Cause must be a free cause. "It can not have been itself caused. It is absurd to look for it among effects. But we never get out of the Sphere of Effects until we enter that of free agency, until we emerge from the natural into the spiritual, until we leave matter and reach mind. The First Cause must indeed be in—all through—the universe; but it must also be out of the universe, anterior to, and above the universe. The idea of Cause is a delusion—the search for Causes an inexplicable folly—if there be no First Cause, and if that First Cause be not a free cause, a Will, a Spirit, a Person. Reason, if honest and consistent, can not in its pursuit of Causes stop short of a rational will. That alone answers to and satis-

fies its idea of a Cause. The complex and harmonious constitution of the Universe is the Expression of a Divine Idea, of a Creative Reason."[4]

The hypothesis of a Great First Cause worthy of being called God and worshiped as such, is the most rational explanation of what we know ourselves to be and of what we perceive the universe around us to be. It reduces the mystery of existence to its lowest terms. It demonstrates the theorem that there is a God as nearly as it is possible for finite mind to comprehend such a transcendent proposition. All other explanations of the Universe, when followed to their logical consequences, lead us to the absurd. The most reasonable explanation of the universe is that "Nature is but the name for an effect whose Cause is God." Its order, its marvelous adaptations, the existence of moral and intelligent beings as its climax, all point unerringly and inevitably to an Eternal Person of infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness, working toward a grand moral and spiritual consummation—"one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The grandeur of the material universe and the essential greatness of human nature alike assure us that they can not be the outcome of

[4]Flint's "Theism," page 130.

blind and vagrant forces operating aimlessly in infinite space and limitless time, originating we know not where, nor when, nor how, nor why. The existence of life and mind and the moral sense point unerringly to an Author who is himself living, intelligent and moral. The facts around us and within us convince us that the universe and man are the visible embodiment of an intelligent and moral purpose. On the surface of both the material and immaterial world, in both matter and mind, are the footprints of an all-wise, all-powerful, infinitely pure Creator, greater than man and the universe, before all things, outside all things, and above all things. "All the causes with which we come in contact here are, as we term them, second causes; but they point to a cause beyond themselves, to a cause of causes, to a Supreme all-producing Cause, Itself uncaused, unoriginated. The heavenly bodies move on unceasingly in their orbits, obedient to the laws of gravitation, but no law of gravitation assigned them their place in space. The whole universe bids us look beyond itself for the adequate explanation of its existence."[5]

[5] Liddon's "Some Elements of Religion," page 53.

IV

HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? IS JESUS A MYTH?

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty."—*St. Peter.*

"O myth! O how far exalted above all human mythology is this representation of Christ! He who could create such fiction is able also to create worlds, call spirits into being, inspire life and the highest blessedness, by the simple power of his breath. The facts are conclusive, that one has here not myth, but overwhelming reality and truth."—*Jacobi.*

"Measure Jesus by the shadow he has cast into the world? No, by the light he has shed upon it. Shall we be told such a man never lived? That the whole story is a lie? Suppose that Plato and Newton never lived. But who did their works, and thought their thoughts? It takes a Newton to forge a Newton. What man could have fabricated a Jesus? None but a Jesus."—*Theodore Parker.*

IV

Has God Appeared Among Men? Is Jesus a Myth?

Having considered the evidences of the existence of God, and having seen that if such a being exists he has probably revealed himself to man, the question of fact now arises, "Has the God appeared among men?"

In seeking an answer to this question it is irrelevant to discuss the possibility of an incarnation. That is a speculative issue which might be pertinent to some discussions, and it is a matter of importance, but we are now concerned with a bare question of fact. If conclusive evidence is found that an incarnation has taken place, that the God has appeared in our world, then there is an end of controversy touching the possibility of an incarnation. Nor will our incapacity to understand the mode of the incarnation in any degree affect the validity of the proof of it as a fact. Men must respect facts without regard to their own ability to understand modes and processes, and upon this principle they constantly act with the greatest confidence in dealing with all the affairs of every-day life.

There is little chance of deception about the incarnation as a fact, if the God has indeed appeared among men. The Divine nature rises too far above man's nature to make the successful simulation of it an easy task. Any pseudo-theophanies, any impostures may be detected easily. The unearthly tones of the divine voice can not be so perfectly mimicked that men need mistake the speech of a pretender for the Word of God. The appearance of the true God, if He should appear, we may be sure will be as unmistakable as the lightning which cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West; it can neither be concealed nor counterfeited.

If the God has ever appeared among men he appeared in the person of him whom we call Jesus. All who have ever come, before him or after him, are manifestly "of the earth, earthy." If he be not God we need not look for another. We may limit our question therefore to the narrower issue, "Did the God appear among men in the person of Jesus of Nazareth?"

In the investigation of this question we must not assume too much. Let us assume only those things which no one can deny, viz.: that in four brief memoirs commonly known as the Gospels a distinct character is set forth under the name of Jesus. We do not assume that these short treatises were written by the men

whose names they bear. We do not assume that these records are authentic. We simply affirm that the character called Jesus is set forth in the books.

The question then arises, Is this character a myth or a historic personage? And we affirm that neither the four Evangelists, nor any other men of that time or of any other time, could have invented this character, or have constructed it out of any materials which existed then or which exist now.

Let us attend to some of the most striking features of this character.

1. It is an *original* character. It has no companion piece in any literature, ancient or modern. The nearest approach to it is the Messianic character dimly set forth in the sacred books of the Jews. But neither ancient nor modern Jews recognize in Jesus the fulfilment of the ideal of their Messiah. Certainly no writer, Jewish or Pagan, in the age of Tiberius could have drawn the picture of Jesus from the Messianic outlines in the Hebrew Scriptures.

2. It is a *perfect* character—"the only perfect character that ever had a place in the history or thought of men." He is represented as living under the hardest conditions of poverty and friendlessness, opposed by enemies the

most implacable, beset by circumstances the most trying to piety and virtue. But he is set forth as never sinning and never repenting. Of the faultlessness of this character a sceptical historian has written, "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love, has shown itself capable of acting on all nations, ages, temperaments, and conditions, has been not only the highest pattern of virtue but the strongest incentive to its practice, and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists."[1] Of this character John Stuart Mill has written, "When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon the earth, religion can not be said to have made a bad choice in pitching upon this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better

[1]Lecky's "History of European Morals," Vol. II., page 9.

translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract to the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life."[2]

3. The perfection of this character is especially manifest in its *perfect symmetry* and balance of excellencies. It presents a combination of the active and passive virtues in perfect proportion, such as can not be found in any other person, historic or fictitious. It blends piety and philanthropy, holiness and compassion, justice and love, purity and tenderness, joy and sorrow, in a way never before lived or imagined. "He is never said to have laughed, and yet he never makes the impression of austerity, moroseness, sadness, or even of being unhappy."[3] He endures the hardest privations, and yet there is about him a majesty which forbids the thought of helplessness. "In fact he does not allow us after all to think much of his privations; we think of him more as a being of mighty resources, proving himself only the more sublimely that he is in the guise of destitution. He is the most unworldly of beings, having no desire at all for what the earth can give, impossible to be caught with any longing for its benefits, impassible even to its

[2] "Essays on Theism," page 255.

[3] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 286.

charms, and yet there is no ascetic sourness or repugnance, no misanthropic distaste in his manner, as if he were bracing himself against the world to keep it off. At the wedding he is clothed in congratulation, at the feast in doctrine, at the funeral in tears; but no miser was ever drawn to his money with a stronger desire than he to worlds above the world. Men undertake to be spiritual and they become ascetic; or endeavoring to hold a liberal view of the comforts and pleasures of society, they are soon buried in the world and slaves to its fashions; or holding a scrupulous watch to keep out every particular sin, they become legal, and fall out of liberty; or charmed with noble and heavenly liberty, they run to negligence and irresponsible living; so the earnest become violent, the fervent fanatical and censorious, the gentle waver, the firm turn bigots, the liberal grow lax, the benevolent ostentatious. Poor human infirmity can hold nothing steady. And yet the character of Christ is never modified, even by a shade of rectification. It is one and the same throughout. He makes no improvements, prunes no extravagances, returns from no eccentricities. The balance of his character is never disturbed or readjusted, and the astounding assumption on which it is based is

never shaken even by a suspicion that he falters in it."[3]

4. Again, the character of Jesus is a *universal* character. In it there is nothing local or temporary. Nothing provincial or transient adheres to it. No phrase more aptly describes it than the words, "The Son of man." As Renan says, "Jesus is the highest of the pillars that shew man whence he comes and whither he ought to tend. In him is condensed all that is good and exalted in our nature."[4] Or as Strauss remarks "in every respect Jesus stands in the first line of those who have developed the ideal of humanity."[5] "There are many peculiarities arising out of personal and historical circumstances, which are incident to the best human characters, and which would prevent any one of them from being universal or final as a type. But the type set up in the Gospels as the Christian type seems to have escaped all these peculiarities and to stand out in unapproached purity as well as in unapproached perfection of moral excellence. . . . . If that type of character was constructed by human intellect, we must at least bear in mind that it was constructed

[3] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 288.
[4] "Vie de Jesus," page 457.
[5] "Leben Jesus," page 625.

at the confluence of three races, the Jewish, the Greek and the Roman, each of which had strong national peculiarities of its own. A single touch, a single taint of any one of those peculiarities, and the character would have been national, not universal; transient, not eternal. It might have been the highest character in history but it would have been disqualified for being the ideal. Supposing it to have been human, whether it were the real effort of a man to attain moral excellence or a moral imagination of the writers of the Gospels, the chances surely were infinite against its escaping any tincture of the fanaticism, formalism and exclusiveness of the Jew—of the political pride of the Roman—of the intellectual pride of the Greek. Yet it escaped them all. It is the essence of man's moral nature clothed with a personality so vivid and intense as to excite through all ages the most intense affection, yet divested of all those peculiar characteristics, the accidents of time and place by which human personalities are marked."[6]

5. This remarkable character does not appear in the pages of the Evangelists as fabri-

[6] A lecture by Goldwin Smith, quoted by Canon Liddon, on pages 216, 217 of "Some Elements of Religion."

cated by effort. "It is not set forth in a string of epithets, or abstract statements, or by vague, indiscriminate laudation."[7] The character is set forth in easy, artless narratives about which there is an unmistakable air of reality.

6. This marvelous character is the *same in each of the four books* in which it appears. Four writers with indubitable independence have drawn essentially the same picture. Well does Principal Cairns say "One Gospel is a marvel, what shall we say of four, each with its distinct plan,—its enlargements and omissions, its variations, even where most coincident, its problems as yet unsolved, but always yielding something to fresh inquiry, and only making more manifest the unchangeable oneness and dignity of the history? The difficulties of the Gospels from divergence are as nothing compared with the impression made by them all of one transcendent creation."[8]

7. Furthermore, the task of the Evangelists was not ended with drawing a faultless figure. They must put speech upon its lips which would be in keeping with the majesty of its pretensions. If they imagined the man, they must also have imagined his teachings, and what they represent

[7] G. P. Fisher's "Manual of Christian Evidences."

[8] "Christ, the Central Evidence of Christianity," in "Tracts for the Times," Vol. I., page 4.

him as saying is as marvelous as what they describe him as being. His doctrines are final. They are ultimate truths which the world can never outgrow. It is not possible to think a thought higher than his doctrine of the fatherhood of God, nor one wider than his tenet of the brotherhood of man, nor one deeper than his conception of holiness of heart. Hope can not dream a brighter vision than that which shines in his teachings concerning the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting after death. His conception of a world-wide "Kingdom of Heaven," which should endure forever, is absolutely unique; for it seers and philosophers have brought forth no mate idea. The sayings of Jesus are not anticipated by any discourses before his time, and not one solitary shred of religious truth has been added to the world's stock since the Gospels were first published.

8. Moreover the Evangelists record these marvelous utterances as parts of a calm narrative. They do not betray the excitement of discoverers in penning them, but they evince the calmness of eye-witnesses who simply repeat the words of a speaker uttered in their own hearing which were so entirely in keeping with his supernatural nature as to leave no room for surprise. They represent him as speaking with

the most perfect serenity. "He delivers the most tremendous truths with the most perfect composure and balance of spirit. If a mere man were to see clearly for the first time what the Sermon on the Mount, the third Chapter of John, the parable of the Prodigal, and a score of other discourses and revelations like them, really signify; if a mere man were, so to speak, to come suddenly upon such thoughts, such conceptions, so vast, deep and high, it would unbalance him. His brain would be on fire and his heart would break with holy excitement."[9] But the Evangelists break into no rhapsodies when they record his words.

Is this marvelous character a myth? Are his discourses the inventions of novelists and romancers? Is the character the creature of imagination and the doctrine the product of the collaboration of four Jewish peasants of the time of Tiberius? Or of any other time?

Neither the age of Tiberius nor any other age could have supplied the intellectual agencies equal to the task of creating the character and discourses of Jesus. After the Christian world has had the benefit of the four Gospels for eighteen centuries there has not been produced, nor can there now be found a writer who is able to imagine a character which approxi-

[9] **"The Man of Galilee," by Bishop Haygood, page 77.**

mates this character. The task lies quite beyond the powers of modern writers, however great; and far more beyond the capacity of any one in the first centuries of the Christian era,—most of all beyond the ability of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, to whom the four gospels are commonly attributed. "If to them had been granted all personal qualifications, the conditions under which they lived made the invention of such a character impossible; they could not breathe the intellectual, social and moral air in which they lived and do it. For this character, the Jesus of the Evangelists, is not in harmony with the essential characteristics of the Jewish race, or with the dominant influences of that time; this character antagonizes these characteristics and influences at every point."[10] "Equally, it is incredible that these four men could have thought out the teachings of Jesus. For such thinking they lacked all things that history and philosophy show to be necessary for such thinking. Why could not Socrates and Plato, great, learned, wise and good, to whom came more than glimpses of heavenly truths, think out what the Sermon on the Mount contains. Socrates and Plato, if mere men could do such thinking, ought to have thought out the Sermon on the Mount; for they

[10]Bishop Haygood's "Man of Galilee," page 20.

had every gift that nature could bestow, and every opportunity cultured Athens could offer. And they did their best to think out the truths that bind Man and God together. They failed; and Plato sighed for the coming of a divine Man who could make clear what to him was dark. And yet if Jesus never lived, the four Evangelists, or men like them, thought out His wonderful doctrines. It is unthinkable."[11]

The life and words of Jesus are beyond the power of inventive genius. The life was lived; the words were spoken, or the Gospels are themselves as great a miracle as the incarnation of God. As Rousseau puts the case,—"The Gospel has marks of truth so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of it would be more astonishing than the hero."

And this conclusion is still further confirmed, if we consider the mighty and beneficent forces which have issued from Christianity. Can influences so pure and institutions so enduring have sprung from a myth, and that too during the centuries in which men have been recording consecutive histories? Discussing this mythical theory, Prebendary Row says with great force, "Its meaning, stripped of all disguises, is that the mightiest power, which for more than

[11]Bishop Haygood's "The Man of Galilee," pages 21, 22.

eighteen centuries has energized for good, nay more, which is at this moment the cause of an overwhelming majority of such institutions as exist in Europe and America for promoting the happiness of man is based on a delusion. If then the Jesus of the Gospels is an ideal creation, and not an historical reality, then a phantom and a shadow has been the centre of a mightier power, and has exerted a mightier influence for good than all the realities which have ever existed. If this be so, one thing is true and one only,—that man is walking in a vain shadow and disquieting himself in vain. Why then struggle for truth, for delusions are mightier than realities, and their influence for good has been greater than all the self-sacrifice of the wisest and best of men. If so, all is vanity! the present life is a dream, the life to come a blank, and man's only hope—shall I not say his best hope?—is to be swallowed up in that eternal silence out of which he has come, to which he is hastening, and from which there will be no awakening."[12]

"The person of Jesus Christ stands solid in the history of man. He is indeed more substantial, more abiding, in human apprehension than any form of matter, or mode of force. The conceptions of earth and air, and fire and

[12]"Manual of Christian Evidences," page 93.

water, change and melt around him as the clouds melt and change around an everlasting mountain peak. All attempts to resolve him into a myth, a legend, an air—and hundreds of such attempts have been made—have drifted over the enduring reality of his character and left not a rack behind. The result of all criticism, the final verdict of enlightened common sense, is that Christ is historical. He is such a person as men could not have imagined if they would, and would not have imagined if they could. He is neither Greek myth nor Hebrew legend. The artist capable of fashioning Him did not exist, nor could he have found the materials. A non-existent Christianity did not spring out of the air and create a Christ. A real Christ appeared in the world and created Christianity."[13]

He is so real and enduring that the authors who concocted the "mythical theory" could not publish their books without dating the publication from the day of His birth. The small figures near the bottom of their title-pages more than refuted all the arguments contained in the chapters which followed. The marvels which the Christian Scriptures record as having attended His birth, and which the critics would

[13]"The Gospel for an Age of Doubt," by Henry Van Dyke, D.D., page 59.

resolve into legendary wonders, are not so astounding as that Jesus of Nazareth should constrain the world's date-lines to bend around his manger cradle. When commerce makes entries on its ledgers, when governments issue decrees or publish laws, when infants are born or the aged die, when kings or peasants enter the world, or when they pass to their long home—all pay homage to the Babe of Bethlehem. Calendars which fix dates can not rest on a floating myth. Absolute exactness they may miss as when men dated by the beginning of the world or the founding of Rome. But they point to firm facts that can not be dissolved into myth. That Jesus was born at Bethlehem about nineteen hundred years ago is as certain as that the earth exists or that Rome was built on the Tiber.

V

HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? IS THE JESUS OF THE EVANGELISTS DIVINE?

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—*St. John.*

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—*St. Peter at Caesarea Philippi.*

"My Lord and my God."—*St. Thomas.*

"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God."—*Nathanael.*

"What is the mystery of his person? What does he say of himself? For this will always have to be that which, after all, makes the final decision. For so much confidence we can in any case give him—be we never so distrustful in other respects—that he knew who he was, and did not speak differently from what he knew."—*Luthardt.*

"He called himself the Son of God: who among mortals dare say he was not?"—*Lequinio.*

V

Has God Appeared Among Men? Is the Jesus of the Evangelists Divine?

The story of Jesus is a history and not a fiction. Neither the Evangelists nor any other writer could have imagined such a character. And if the conception of such a life be beyond the power of human imagination, how much more beyond human ability is the fulfilling of such an ideal by actual existence. Ideals are easier of conception than of execution.

Against this conclusion no argument touching the possibility, or the credibility, of miracles is of any force. The character of Jesus is here, and it is of such sort that it transcends the power of human invention to originate and of human effort to actualize. Even now, after it has been given to men, the wisest among them can not fully expound his words, nor the holiest perfectly imitate his example. Herein is a miracle before our own eyes far greater than any single incident in the brief memoirs by the Evangelists. If the deeds attributed to him, which men call miracles, be extracted from the four Gospels, there is left a fragment of the history more difficult to account for than the whole. The unmiraculous facts of his life, which can not be denied, become the most miraculous if

he be not God, for he exhibits superhuman purity without superhuman power. The description given of him by the Evangelists verifies itself as historic reality, and the life described vindicates the claim that he is God. The unmiraculous facts of his history in the flesh "forbid his possible classification with men."

Briefly stated, these facts are a birth in a peasant home; a childhood spent in a despised village of a despised province of a narrow country on the Mediterranean Sea, which was during his life an unimportant part of the Roman Empire; a youth and early manhood occupied with the hard toil of a carpenter's life without formal education in any school; a public life of less than three brief years and a death of shame before his thirty-fifth year. Between his birth and death we find him enduring the hardest poverty, without teachers or friends among the learned and powerful, but rather opposed and hated by them, with no associates but the common, ignorant people of his day and country, and without so much as sympathy for his work and purposes among his nearest friends and dearest kindred. In the midst of such unfavorable conditions his wonderful character was unfolded and his great conceptions put forth. Under these hard conditions and diffi-

cult limitations he lived a life of innocence without weakness, piety without penitence, uniting in perfect harmony both the active and passive virtues in such a manner as they were never combined in any other being who has appeared among men.

While giving this perfect exemplification of personal purity and flawless virtue he assumed an attitude of supremacy toward all men and of equality with God. Moreover there was in him such inherent majesty and about him such visible royalty that he was able to put forward these amazing pretensions without shocking mankind. "For eighteen hundred years, these prodigious assumptions have been published and preached to a world that is quick to lay hold of conceit and bring down the lofty airs of pretenders, and yet during all this time, whole nations of people, composing as well the learned and powerful as the ignorant and humble, have paid their homage to the name of Jesus, detecting never any disagreement between his merits and his pretensions, offended never by any thought of his extravagance. Indeed it will even be found that, in the common apprehension of the race, he maintains the merit of a most peculiar modesty, producing no conviction more distinctly than of his intense lowliness and humility."[1]

[1] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 291.

In keeping with these unprecedented pretensions, this untaught carpenter from a despised province, in a land inhabited by a people held in vassalage, set about organizing a kingdom which he proposed should be universal in extent, everlasting in duration, and possess the quality of lifting its citizens to such an elevation as that they might become sons of God. He put forth this extraordinary scheme in all its details at the outset of his public life, leaving no room for modification, either by addition or subtraction. He was never discouraged as to its success, and in the shadow of his cross was as confident of victory as in the days of his greatest popularity. A devoted woman anointed him at a feast and in eulogizing her act he predicted in one breath that he would soon die, and that nevertheless his Gospel would be preached throughout the whole world, and the incident told as "a memorial of her."

He went about founding his kingdom as no man ever did. He excluded force; the scimitar was not with him as with Mahomet, the instrument of his apostolate. He did not rely upon diplomacy or priestcraft, creed or philosophy, argument or system. He wrote not a line, founded no school, arranged no pompous ceremonies or elaborate ritual. He took the way

of dying, declaring, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

He takes rank with the poor and among the poor he found the best material for citizenship in the kingdom he proposed. But he was the farthest possible removed from the socialistic agitator. He appealed to no class prejudice, aspired to no leadership of a clan seeking to avenge any real or imagined grievance against society. He awakened no impulse of partisan feeling among the common people who heard him gladly. He had compassion on the multitude but he never veered from his plan to win popular approval. In an age of superstition he appealed to the superstitious masses without a syllable of concession to any of the delusive notions which they entertained. He spoke to his times and to all times from the standpoint of one who is outside and above all distinctions of time and event. His voice was that of love calling from the highest heaven.

The spirit in which he lived and toiled cast a halo around the life he fulfilled and the plan he prosecuted. "In all the history of his life we are not able to detect the faintest indication that he slips or falters. And this is more remarkable that he is prosecuting so great a work with so great enthusiasm, counting it his meat and drink, and pouring into it all the energies

of his life. For when men have great works on hand their very enthusiasm runs to impatience. When thwarted or unreasonably hindered, their very souls strike fire against the obstacles they meet, they worry themselves at every hindrance, every disappointment, and break out in stormy and fanatical violence. But Jesus for some reason is just as even, just as serene, in all his petty vexations and hindrances, as if he had nothing on hand to do. A kind of sacred patience invests him everywhere. He is poor and hungry and weary and despised, insulted by his enemies, deserted by his friends, but never disheartened, never fretted or ruffled. He does not seem to rule his temper, but rather to have none."[2]

By what name does reason demand us to call one who has so lived and so labored? May we not reasonably trust one so good, so wise and so calm, to state his own place in the Universe? Is he not too true to deceive us? Is he not too wise and too serene to be himself deceived? Is not the charge of imposture or fanaticism inadmissible in his case? May we not with Channing say, "When I trace the unaffected majesty which runs through the life of Jesus, and see him never falling below his sublime claims, amidst poverty and scorn, and his last agony, I

[2]Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 294.

have a feeling of the reality of his character which I can not express. I feel that the Jewish carpenter could no more have conceived and sustained this character under motives of imposture than an infant's arm could repeat the deeds of Hercules or his unawakened intellect comprehend and rival the matchless works of genius." And if we may not charge him with imposture, much less may we charge him with being deceived by the madness of enthusiasm, or the folly of fanaticism. It is admitted on all hands that he is without fault. But if we admit that in righteousness he is perfect and affirm nevertheless that as to himself he was deceived, then the most royal virtue was unable to find and hold the truth. Then indeed we have reached the most hopeless agnosticism. If Jesus was deceived all other men may well despair of finding what is true. Henceforth the pursuit of truth is but "a fool's errand."

But if Jesus was neither a deceiver nor deceived, it is of the last importance that we consider his own estimate of himself. What does he claim for himself? Hear him: "I am the light of the World." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "I and the Father that sent me." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." If he be not God did presumption ever

rise so high as his conceit? If he be not God there is mingled in his nature the wildest chaos of truth and falsehood, pride and humility, reverence and profanity, wisdom and folly, weakness and strength, piety and wickedness. The criticism which denies his divinity while allowing him unsurpassed wisdom and unparalleled virtue is illogical and self-destructive. If he is not God, he is not good. The acknowledgment of his divinity is the only rational solution of the facts of his humanity.

"It is easier for a good man to believe that in a world where he is encompassed by mysteries, where his own being is a consummate mystery, the Moral Author of the wonders around him should for great moral purposes have taken to himself a created form, than that the one human life which realizes the idea of humanity, who is at once perfect strength and perfect tenderness, the one pattern of our race in whom its virtues are combined, and from whom its vices are eliminated, should have been guilty when speaking about himself, of an arrogance, of a self-seeking and of an insincerity, which, if admitted, must justly degrade him far below the moral level of millions among his unhonored worshipers. It is easier, in short, to believe that God has consummated his works of wonder and mercy by a crowning self-revelation in

which mercy and beauty reach their climax, than to close the moral eye to the brightest spot that meets it in human history and to see at last in man's inexplicable destiny only the justification of his despair."[3] "For if, not being divine, He yet claimed divinity, we should shrink back from him, revolted and appalled. The meanest capacity can recognize the unutterable distance which separates man from God; and how could we respect One who, not being God, yet even in the feebleness of his obscurity, even in the depth of his nameless humiliation, even in the utter impotence of his human infirmity, made Himself equal with God? Oh! would not this have been the very blasphemy of imposture, the very insanity of self-deception, the very fatuity of arrogance in one whom all have recognized as the wisest, humblest, holiest of the Sons of men. Truly, if we reject His Godhead, then, though we took not up stones to stone Him, we might well turn from Him with agonies of wrath and tears."[4]

Men who laud his wisdom and goodness, while denying his divinity, involve themselves in logical contradictions and moral inconsisten-

[3] Liddon's Bampton Lectures, pages 204, 205.

[4] Canon Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ," page 85.

cies, which a plain man can neither reconcile nor understand. Like Judas in the garden, they seem to hail Him as Lord while they betray Him with a kiss. They treat Him as the ancient Pagans treated a sacrificial ox—cover Him with garlands while leading Him to death.

But in seeking thus to crucify the Son of God afresh they do but advance to their own destruction and to the overthrow of their treacherous systems. When St. Peter, in the face of all sorts of popular but false views of Jesus which accounted Him as one of the prophets but denied His divinity, declared "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God"—he declared the immovable conclusion of invincible logic as well as the assured belief of confident faith.

VI

HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD? ST. PAUL'S TESTIMONY EXAMINED

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve. After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the Apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."—*St. Paul to the Corinthians.*

"The apostolic writers have staked the truth of Christianity on one miracle alone—the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Of this we have stronger proof than of any other event in the history of the past. This being so, to allow the truth of Christianity to be staked on any of those numerous issues which at the present day are raised, as though its truth or falsehood depends on our ability to solve them, is not only unnecessary, but in numerous cases extremely dangerous. 'What sign,' say the Jews, 'showest thou unto us, seeing thou doest these things? *i. e.* the cleansing of the temple. Jesus answered and said unto them: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . He spake of the temple of His body.'"—*Prebendary Row.*

VI

Has God Appeared Among Men? Did Jesus Rise From the Dead? St. Paul's Testimony Examined.

In the preceding chapters no miracle of Jesus has been assumed, or relied on, to attest his divinity. Only the undenied and undeniable facts of his life on the earth—the unmiraculous facts—have been arrayed to establish his divine character and authority. These unmiraculous facts are admitted by the most celebrated unbelievers in the world. No one competent to pass on such a question now denies that during the reign of Tiberius an eminent Jew, called Jesus, gathered about him in Palestine a number of followers who believed in him as the Messiah of Jewish expectation, and that they continued in this belief even after he disappeared from among men, and that in common with those first followers there are millions of professed disciples of this same Jesus now on the earth who claim that after his execution by Pontius Pilate, his death, and his burial, he arose from the dead.

Is this claim founded in fact, or is it false? Did Jesus indeed rise from the dead? If the resurrection of Jesus can not be established as

an historical fact, it is an idle waste of time to either defend or attack any other miracles attributed to him. His death, if he rose not, is fatal to his every claim of divinity, and his career among men only adds another problem to the stock of their religious perplexity. If he did not rise from the dead, all the other miracles recorded in the New Testament, even though the records were multiplied until the books filled the world, would not avail to prove him divine or attest Christianity as a divine revelation. In fact, the more such miracles seemed to show him a superhuman person the more confusing and sorrowful would be the case of his followers, for if he were only a man, the worst that could be said at his death would be that the best man the world ever saw could not escape death; but if he appeared to be God and then died—hopelessly died without a resurrection—then God seemed dead! Pitiable beyond all expression would be the case of the holiest man falling before death never to rise again; but horrible beyond power of both thought and speech would be the fact that even the God himself had succumbed to death! If his miracles before his death led any of his followers to believe Him divine, and after his death Jesus did not rise, then, as one of them truly said, "they were of all men most misera-

ble," and they who have succeeded to their faith have inherited a legacy of darkness and woe.

If, on the other hand, he did rise from the dead all controversy is at an end. The spell of the natural is passed. The supernatural has broken in upon our world. He hath brought life and immortality to light. Any and all of his other miracles are credible, *a priori* presumptions to the contrary notwithstanding.

The key of the Christian position therefore is in this bare issue of fact, and it is to the consideration of this issue we are now come.

For the time being let the testimony of the Evangelists be set aside since unbelievers claim that those "memoirs" were not accepted even by the churches until the latter part of the second century. Later we shall have occasion to show that this hypothesis is untenable, but for the present let it stand as if it were historically well founded, while we consider the testimony of another witness—testimony concerning which, in some particulars at least, all parties are agreed and about which there can be no reasonable doubt.

However men may dispute as to the date, authorship and authenticity of the four books called "the Gospels," it is agreed on all sides

that St. Paul wrote the Epistles to the Galatians, the Romans and the Corinthians.

Baur says: "Not only has no suspicion of the authenticity of these Epistles ever arisen, but they bear so incontestably the seal of the originality of Paul that one can not comprehend for what reason critics could raise any objection to them."[1]

M. Renan, in "The Gospels," pages 40 and 41, declares: "The Epistles of Paul have an unequalled advantage in this history—that is, their absolute authenticity. No serious doubt has ever been raised of the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Romans." In his work entitled "St. Paul," he classes them as "uncontested and incontestable."

What proof do these indubitable Epistles furnish that Jesus rose from the dead?

Before inquiring into the points of testimony set forth in these Epistles, let certain features touching their general character be passed in review.

Beyond all question these four documents carry us to the earliest days of Christianity. The latest date which can be assigned them is twenty-eight years after the crucifixion. They were written during an interval of time

[1] Baur's "Apostle Paul," pages 1-8.

after the crucifixion as short as the period between the present time and the time of Prince Bismarck's contest with Pius IX.—shorter by two years than the period which has elapsed since Victor Emanuel entered Rome as the capital of United Italy. "Not only were they written within twenty-eight years of the crucifixion, by one whose activity as a Missionary of Christianity had extended over the preceding twenty years, but who was then of such an age that his historical recollections were good for at least fifteen years earlier."[2] The writer of these Epistles had therefore such ample information as to the facts and beliefs held by the early church, and such perfect knowledge of contemporary events, as leave no room for mistake, unless he was the victim of hallucination, or the author of falsehood. Moreover, as he tells us in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (xv. 9), he at first persecuted the church with which subsequently he identified himself, and attempted to extirpate the faith which he afterwards embraced. He came to it therefore with no favorable bias towards it.

He gives his testimony in the form of letters,[3]

[2] Prebendary C. A. Row's "Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead," page 14.

[3] N. B.—Christianity is the only religion the sacred books of which contain epistles. It is a religion of facts, for letters can not arise without persons and the facts of personal history.

and not in the form of set histories or arguments. The value of contemporary letters as historical documents in determining the facts of any period of history can not be overestimated. Their allusions to current events not only attest those events, but they help to a right understanding of the significance of such happenings. How do the letters of Cicero certify and illumine the events which occurred in the Roman world of his time!

Now, what do these four letters of St. Paul show as to the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus?

They show that their author, and those to whom they were addressed, professed to believe most firmly in the resurrection as a fact, and that they considered that fact as the very foundation of the faith to which they adhered. In the first sentences of the Epistle to the Romans, he says of Christ that he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans i. 4.) In the salutation with which the Epistle to the Galatians begins, he declares his apostleship, which his enemies had denied, in these words: "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." (Galatians i. 1.) In the first Epistle to the Corinthians he declares with

great emphasis, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of [by] God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." (1 Corinthians xv. 14, 15.)

It is shown by these Epistles that a professed belief in the fact of the resurrection was universally prevalent in churches widely separated, as the churches of Galatia, Corinth and Rome. We find this belief in churches not established by Paul, as well as in those of which he was the founder; for at the writing of the Epistle to the Romans he had never visited Rome. These Epistles show that all the Apostles (of whom Paul names Peter, James and John as Apostles with whom he had personal interviews) claimed to believe that their Lord had risen from the dead, and that they had seen him and talked with him after his resurrection. (Galatians ii. 9; 1 Corinthians xv. 5.) The first Epistle to the Corinthians shows that when it was written there were still living not less than two hundred and fifty people who claimed that they had seen the risen Jesus. (1 Corinthians xv. 6.)

It is furthermore clear that men of all parties and shades of opinion, however they

might differ as to other matters, accepted the resurrection of Jesus as a fact. The Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians are highly controversial documents, but in them all St. Paul resists his opponents by appealing to the resurrection of Jesus as the central axiom of the faith, so settled and undeniable that all dispute must cease when it was reached. In the Corinthian Church there were fierce parties who were opposed to him. Some of these parties gathered around persons, as Apollos, Peter and "Christ." One of these parties went so far as to question his apostolic authority because he had not been one of the original companions of Jesus, who had seen him after the resurrection. He meets the attack by warmly asking, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Corinthians ix. 1.) Whether these words prove that Paul had really seen the risen Saviour or not, they establish the fact that his opponents believed the Saviour had risen, and that all the Apostles had seen him, and that sight of the risen Lord was requisite to an apostleship, or the question could have had no force at all in the controversy.

In the Galatian churches there was a party who not only questioned his apostleship, but who put forth a doctrine so different from, and diametrically opposed to, his teaching, that

he characterized their system as "another Gospel." (Galatians i. 6.) As against them he asserted that his authority, as we have seen, was derived from "Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." "If St. Paul's belief and that of his opponents had not been at complete accord on the subject of the resurrection, no man in his senses would have thrown such a challenge as that which is contained in these words, and also in terms equally strong throughout the entire Epistle."[4] Moreover, in the Galatian Epistle, Paul declares his complete harmony with Peter, James and John, and challenges his opponents, who had come out from the churches where these Apostles lived and labored, to show to the contrary. This fact shows that the belief in the resurrection of Jesus, which was prevalent in Corinth, Rome and Galatia, was held also by the churches at Antioch and Jerusalem. (Galatians ii. 11, 12.)

It is thus evident that the belief that Jesus rose from the dead was no late after-growth in the history of Christianity, but was a fact joyously accepted in the oldest churches from the first—even in the Church at Jerusalem, the

[4]Prebendary Row's "Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," page 20.

city at which the great fact was alleged to have occurred, and where were living witnesses who claimed to have seen him, and where there were living enemies of the faith, personally interested and fearfully impelled by implication in a great crime, to disprove the claim if they could.

From these four Epistles it is clear beyond all controversy "that within a few months after the crucifixion the church must have been reconstructed on the foundation of the belief that its crucified Messiah had been raised again from the dead."[5] It is evident that between the crucifixion and the reconstruction of the church there could not have been a longer interval than a few months or weeks, because, as Prebendary Row forcibly says: "If the interval had been longer while the belief was growing, the church must have perished in its Founder's grave."

Such being the facts, as to the early faith and founding of the church, there are but three theories by which to account for them:

1. Belief in the Resurrection was a conscious and intended fraud by the Apostles and their followers of the first century.

[5]Prebendary Row's "Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ," page 27.

2. Or, they were deceived by some form of hallucination.

3. Or, Jesus did indeed rise from the dead.

Let these alternatives be considered in their order.

The early Christians lacked both motive and ability for a fraud so stupendous and successful as was involved in preaching "Jesus and the resurrection." What had they to gain in this, or any other world by preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead, if it were not a fact? If their statements were false, they would incur the hatred of friends, the persecution of foes, exile, torture and death, and all this without any hope of success; for we must not conceive of the Apostles entering upon the task laid upon them as if in full view of the marvelous success which has issued in the form of Christianity during the last nineteen centuries. Without the resurrection they were foredoomed to failure as well as committed to fraud. They had absolutely nothing to gain and everything to lose. And this was pre-eminently true of St. Paul.

Again, to what motive could they appeal in seeking to attract others to their party? They laid upon their converts (perverts if drawn only to a fraud) the most rigorous rules of self-sacrifice. Without convincing men that the resur-

rection was a fact, how could such lives of self-sacrifice be brought to pass?

"If in very truth Christ rose from the dead, all the facts before us are explained. For in that case we may believe that, as narrated in Acts i. 3, He showed Himself to His disciples 'in many proofs,' and thus evoked in them complete confidence that their Master had trampled death under His feet. If so, we can understand the courage which set at defiance the threats and the power of the most powerful at Jerusalem. Men who on Friday saw Christ hanging on a cross, or knew that he was dead, and who on Sunday saw him living and strong, might well be fearless. For their Master was now manifestly Lord of Life and Death, and he had promised ever to be with them. Their fearless assertion that Christ had risen, in the face of men who had every motive for silencing them and apparently many means of doing so, would naturally convince many. And that many were convinced, the survival and spread of early Christianity proves. If Christ rose, we can understand how Paul's contact with Christians, while dragging them before courts of law, would help to his conversion. For we can easily conceive that, as he listened to their straightforward statements of fact, and possibly to their account of the teach-

ing of Christ, he would find it more and more difficult to resist the accumulating evidence that the Crucified One was indeed the hoped-for Deliverer. This slowly dawning and growing conviction would prepare the way for the crisis which raised it at once to complete certainty. Thus the actual resurrection of Christ would abundantly account for the early spread of Christianity. It would also account for the effect of the Gospel upon the world."[6] On the other hand, if Christ did not rise, the belief of His early followers, and the effect of the Gospel upon the world, are incapable of explanation. We have the most prodigious effects for which we can assign no adequate cause.

Of one thing we may be sure, such effects could not have been produced by men consciously propagating a fraud. Falsehood could never have been so potent and beneficent. If so, honesty, sincerity and truthfulness are qualities and forces we need not seek. For in a great historic crisis dishonesty and falsehood did more for the world than all sincerity and truth ever did before. The resurrection of Jesus is more credible than that falsehood was ever able to bear and do so much. The theory of fraud is untenable.

[6] Joseph Agar Beet's "The Credentials of the Gospel," pages 122, 123.

Is the theory of hallucination a more credible explanation of the wide-spread belief in the fact of the resurrection which St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians and Romans show to have been in the earth within less than thirty years after the crucifixion?

No serious account need be taken of the idle fancy which has been put forth by some, viz.: that Jesus did not die at the crucifixion, that he was taken down in a swoon from which he awoke in the sepulchre, that he succeeded in creeping out in an exhausted state and in going into a place of retirement, and that his credulous followers afterwards mistook this partial recovery for a resurrection. Absolutely absurd and unthinkable are the assumptions necessary to sustain such a theory. Can any sane man believe Jesus, the best man the world ever saw, lent himself to such a trick; that an exhausted man eluded his enemies, rolled the stone from the sepulchre, induced a few of his friends to lend themselves to his scheme, and help him to concealment; hid himself so effectually from the powerful foes who crucified him in the first instance that they never were able to overtake him again; deceived the majority of his friends, and from his place of hiding so inspired them with confidence in his resurrection that they went forth making such converts

as Saul of Tarsus, and created a new world on the basis of a clumsy piece of jugglery which could not command even the momentary belief of the simplest people of the time, without the connivance of his enemies and the lunacy or falsehood of his friends? To put forth such a notion as this theory involves, in order to explain the religious phenomena of the first century, is to exhibit a phenomenal credulity in the nineteenth or twentieth century. It is more credible to believe that the God has lived incarnate among men, died and has risen again, and that by his power he has brought to pass the history which has followed the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth, than to believe a Jewish carpenter, who was recovered from a swoon after his crucifixion, could have so successfully escaped the sepulchre, and have imposed upon mankind any measure of faith in his resurrection.

But what of the "theory of visions," put forth by Renan and others, to account for the wide-spread faith in the resurrection, which St. Paul's four great Epistles show in existence so soon after the crucifixion?

According to this theory, this wide-spread belief in the resurrection of Jesus so soon after his crucifixion was due to the fact that certain followers of Jesus simultaneously fell victims

to mental hallucinations, mistaking certain visionary appearances, the creations of their overwrought imaginations, for objective realities, until they came to believe that they had seen and conversed with him after the resurrection.

It should be remarked at the outset of the discussion of this theory, that if it be true the delusion of these men is unique in its form. Other men have believed they saw spirits—ghosts out of the flesh. But no one except them has ever affirmed that he saw and talked with a man after he was dead, not as a spirit, but in bodily reality.

These men lacked the mental conditions required for such an hallucination as the "vision theory" attributes to the early followers of Jesus. One of three mental conditions must exist before the mind can yield itself to an hallucination, viz.: *prepossession, a fixed idea, or a state of expectancy.* Far from these states existing in the minds of the early disciples, there is not only no evidence to show the probability of such mental conditions among them, but every reason to believe that nothing was more improbable, both as concerns them and every other Jew of their times. The "prepossessions," if they had been affected by any, would have all been such as would have arisen from the conception of a political Messiah, who could

not be killed, rather than of a Spiritual Messiah who should die and rise again. Their "fixed ideas," if they had possessed any, must have been in line with the carnal conceptions of their generation. Their "expectancy" was that of the current hope of Israel. The risen Jesus destroyed all the mental habits of a lifetime. He shattered every earthly hope entertained by them and their countrymen, and sent them forth to do a work which the unconverted Jew had not only never imagined, but to which he was absolutely opposed when it was proposed to him. The teaching of the Judaizers, as they appear in Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Corinthians, show the direction that the hallucinations of the Apostles would have taken if they had become possessed of any. The simplicity of the Gospel was an offense to the Judaizers. They desired a more Jewish God than Jesus.

Again, why should the same form of hallucination have possessed the minds of so many and so different persons at the same time? The impulsive Peter, the affectionate John, the stern James, the incredulous Thomas, and above five hundred more, St. Paul affirms, claimed to have seen the risen Jesus. Did all the followers of Jesus take to seeing visions, all of the same sort, and to mistaking them for

realities? What is there in the story of Jesus which would thus draw together a company of men and women addicted to the habit of hallucination and would give them all the same bent?

Furthermore, if the appearances of Jesus were mere visions, why did they cease within a very limited time after the crucifixion—say forty days? What cured the visionaries of their hallucinations all at once? Why were they all cured simultaneously? Why did not the distemper last them longer? Their visions, if only the product of imagination and enthusiasm, ought to have intensified the emotional excitement from which they sprang, and thus have multiplied themselves as far into the future as these unhealthy minds could have endured to furnish soil for such a growth? But they suddenly ceased altogether. Such a phenomenon is against all human experience and contrary to every known law of mind. The theory of visions is incredible.

Jesus must have risen from the dead, or the facts set forth in Paul's letters to the Romans, the Corinthians and Galatians, which no man denies or can deny, have no adequate explanation. And this conclusion is further enforced by the considerations brought forth in the next chapter.

VII

ST. PAUL'S TESTIMONY CONTINUED, AND ITS CORROBORATION BY THE EXISTENCE OF THE CHURCH AND THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."—*St. Paul.*

"The words 'Christ is risen from the dead' should be well marked, and written with great letters. Each letter should be as large as a town. Yea, even as high as heaven, and broad as the earth, so that we see nothing, hear nothing, think nothing, know nothing beyond it."—*Martin Luther.*

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body."—*From the Epistle to the Ephesians.*

VII

St. Paul's Testimony Continued, and its Corroboration by the Existence of the Church and the History of Christianity.

From the four unquestioned Epistles of St. Paul it is evident that within a few months after the crucifixion the church was reconstructed on the foundation supplied by the belief that Jesus rose from the dead. It is necessary, therefore, for those who attribute this belief in his resurrection to either fraud or hallucination on the part of the early disciples, to account not alone for the belief, but for the church founded on that belief. Here is not only a creed but an institution. While the creed was forming and gaining new converts, as well as new articles, the old followers who had committed themselves before the crucifixion to a temporal and political Messiah must be held together and finally led to change front and attach themselves to a spiritual Messiah. We not only do not see these charter members of the kingdom dwindling away after the death of Jesus, as naturally would have been the case if

he had not risen, but we see their numbers marvelously augmented immediately after the crucifixion. Many of the people who were the bitterest foes of them and of their Master before he died, now became their most devoted friends, and the ardent advocates of his resurrection. The institution which we call the church thus rises at once fair and strong out of the grave of Jesus.

Men sometimes point to the professed revelations of Spiritualism as a parallel to the belief of the early disciples in the resurrection. But what great body of truth has spiritualism produced analogous to the doctrines held by the church, as set forth in these four Epistles of St. Paul, and what institution has it created or influence has it exerted to renew the world and renovate mankind? "Spiritualism, with all its alleged powers of penetrating into the secrets of the unseen world and all similar marvels, has achieved nothing. But respecting the Gospel of the resurrection the great Christian Missionary could write to those who had actual knowledge of the facts in the first of his extant letters, dating only twenty-three years from the crucifixion: 'Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before God our Father, ... for our Gospel

came not unto you in word only, but also in power; . . . . and ye became imitators of us and of the Lord; . . . . and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus."[1] No just comparison can be instituted between an arid, barren spiritualism, producing nothing more or better than the vacant stare of the ignorant and superstitious, and a fertile and fertilizing faith, renewing the face of the earth with the products of the Christian church and the Christian life.

And in connection with the consideration of these facts, as recorded in the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul, we may glance forward to observe that similar facts continued to spring up at a later day. Tacitus, Suetonius and Pliny all bear witness to the fact that Christianity was extensively prevalent in their day, and it may be remarked in passing that the most sceptical unbelievers of the records bearing the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John believe without hesitation these Pagan historians. Tacitus, writing in the first century, calls the Christians at Rome "ingens multitudo," i. e., "a vast multitude." In a letter addressed by Pliny

[1] **Prebendary Row's "Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus," pages 44, 45.**

the Younger to the Emperor Trajan, near the beginning of the second century, he says: "The contagion of this superstition has not merely pervaded the cities, but also all villages and country places." He intimates that until its power had been restrained by persecution the spread of Christianity had caused the Pagan temples to be "almost deserted," their solemnities to be "long intermitted," and the victims for their altars to have been "almost without purchasers." The belief and the church which arose so soon after the crucifixion were not spent forces a century later, but rather more powerful and prevalent. The same forces have continued until this day.

Christianity is not a vanishing quantity, but a constantly increasing power. It was introduced into the world by human instruments the most feeble and despised. It has triumphed over opposition the most malignant and potent. It made no concessions to sin or selfishness. It relied on no instrumentality of force or worldly wisdom to win its way. It availed itself of no favorable current in the popular opinion prevalent among either Jews or Pagans. It cleansed Jews of their narrowness, and purged Pagans of their moral pollution and of their corrupting idolatries.

If Christ be not risen, these effects are inex-

plicable. The solution of them by Gibbon, as originally put forth by that sceptical historian, nor the revision of that solution by Mr. Lecky, is an adequate explanation of these results. Gibbon explains the rapid spread of Christianity by the "zeal" of the early Christians, "the doctrine of a future life," " the miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church," "the pure and austere morals of the first Christians," and "the union and discipline of the Christian republic." But as Canon Liddon truly remarks, "Each of these causes points at once and irresistibly to a cause beyond itself. If the zeal of the first Christians was, as Gibbon will have it, a fanatical habit of mind inherited from Judaism, how came it not merely to survive, but to acquire a new intensity, when the narrow nationalism which provoked it in the Jew had been wholly renounced? What was it that made the first Christians so zealous amid surrounding lassitude, so holy amid encompassing pollution? Why should the doctrine of a life to come have had a totally different effect when proclaimed by the Apostles from any which it had had when taught by Socrates or by Plato, or by other thinkers of the Pagan world? How came it that a few peasants or tradesmen could erect a world-wide organization sufficiently elastic to adapt itself to the genius of races the

most various, sufficiently uniform to be everywhere visibly conservative of its unbroken identity? If the miracles of the early church or any of them were genuine, how can they avail to explain the *naturalness* of the spread of Christianity? If they were all false, how extraordinary is this spectacle of a moral triumph, such as even Gibbon acknowledges that of Christianity to be, brought about by means of a vast and odious imposition."[2]

Mr. Lecky, in his "History of European Morals," explains the success of Christianity by the "elements of power and attraction" combined in it; its freedom from "local ties"; its strong appeal to the affections; its "pure and noble system of ethics"; its doctrines of "the brotherhood of man," and of the "supreme sanctity of love"; its "ideal of compassion and love"; "the congruity of its teaching with the spiritual nature of mankind." But these lofty characteristics of Christianity are themselves effects which call for explanation. They can not be the final cause of the religion which produced them. Mr. Lecky merely analyzes the mystery and catalogues some of its parts, and by subdivision of the wonder multiplies the marvels which call for explanation.

Let the agencies, human and superhuman,

[2] Liddon's "Bampton Lectures," pages 135, 136.

which wrought the early and later triumphs of Christianity be what they may, it remains that no such results could have been accomplished if Jesus had not risen from the dead. Too much was involved in that event for anything but failure without it. Christianity, persistent and powerful, since a few months after the crucifixion, is the visible and increasing proof that Jesus has risen. Paul argued to the Corinthians, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain." The converse is also true, if neither the preaching nor the faith have been vain, it is because Christ has risen. Because his early followers "believed, as we believe, that He was God in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of sinful men, therefore the Jews accepted a martyred Galilean as their Messiah, and the Greeks and Romans a crucified Jew as their God, and the fierce Northern hordes exchanged their warrior deities for the peaceful, suffering humiliation of the white Christ. And what is it the modern theorists ask us to believe? They ask us to believe that eighteen hundred years ago there lived in the most despised village of the most despised province of a conquered land a man (and here I may be pardoned for that which a Christian may well shudder to repeat)—a man, unlearned and ignorant, and not free from sin—the son of peasant parents,

who, after having lived thirty years in the deepest obscurity, as a village carpenter, came forth for three years to preach a doctrine which had no originality, a doctrine which is often self-contradictory, always defective, exaggerated and impractical, and that when this fantastic pietist, half dreamer, half deceiver, made claims so violently opposed to His own clearest teachings that he suffered a slave's death for treason and blasphemy His followers grossly falsified the events of His ordinary life, and though they were men whose lives and teaching showed that they would rather 'die than lie,' yet, suddenly transformed by this utter failure and shameful death from coward fugitives into dauntless missionaries, they either invented or imagined an ignorant story about his resurrection, in attestation of which they were ever ready, with demented enthusiasm, to face the wild beast and stand undaunted in the flame; and that on this empty teaching and this invented tale was built a church which, after eighteen centuries, is still invincible in proportion to its purity and its faith, and were founded the institutes of a new kingdom of God, which 'with the irresistible might of weakness,' rising up between an effete Judaism and guilty heathendom, revolu-

tionized and overcome the world."[3] Such theories are "a vast incongruous heap of absurdities and impossibilities." History, ancient and modern, attests the resurrection of Jesus.

This conclusion is strongly stated in the Fernley lecture of 1889, thus:

"If Christ did not rise, a delusion has saved the world.

"In the days of Christ, the apparently hopeless world was sinking helplessly into social chaos. Gradually out of the chaos we have seen new life rising, until at last it has nearly overspread the earth. The nations which have received it stand to-day in the front rank. And to these the most hopeful of other nations are looking. In the social life of our own country we see the moral influence of Christianity. If these influences were removed, there would be in modern life a void which nothing could fill.

"All these results have flowed from the preaching of men who, but for the courage inspired by a belief that their Master had risen from the dead, would never have dared to preach, or certainly would not have devoted their lives to the unwearied proclamation of the Gospel. Especially are these results due to the preaching

[3] Canon Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ," pages 86, 87.

of one who gave proof of the strength and sincerity of his belief by forsaking in the noonday of his life the murderers of Christ and joining the company of his persecuted followers.

"Now, if Christ did not actually rise, this belief was a delusion. And it is the most astounding delusion that ever darkened the erring mind of man. For not only did it enable its early votaries to set at naught hardship and peril and death, but in all succeeding ages it has held captive many of the most intelligent and cultured men, and now for many centuries nearly all the best men. Unquestionably it occupies a position without parallel among the delusions of mankind.

"That delusion has saved the world. For, as we have seen, had not the early preachers of the Gospel been deluded about the historic fact of the resurrection of Christ, they would never have preached, there would have been no Christian churches and no Christianity, the one influence which has saved the world from ruin would not have existed, and the world would have perished.

"If this be so, we owe to delusion and to error a debt greater than we can conceive.

"Fortunate it was for the world that the early Christians were so easily deceived by the creations of their own imagination. Had Pe-

ter and John been men of cooler and keener intelligence, instead of preaching that Christ had risen, they would have sought out his grave, and found that his body was still there, or they would have found that it had never been given to his friends (as is stated expressly in each of the four Gospels), but had become indistinguishable in some trench in which the other criminals were buried. Then would the triumph of Annas and Caiaphas have been complete, the Galileans would have crept back to their fishing and Jesus would have been remembered as the last and greatest of the prophets.

"Fortunate it was for the world that the scholar of Gamaliel was so easily led astray by the fishermen of Gennesaret. If the author of the Epistle to the Romans had been armed with the keen weapons of modern historical criticism, he would not only have escaped, but would have done much to dispel the delusion to which he fell a victim. For he would have persecuted the Christians to the end; or, if he had come to a better mind, would have explained to Peter and John that the real grandeur of Christ lay not in his supposed resurrection from the dead and superhuman dignity, but in the purity of his life and the loftiness of his moral teaching. Or, more likely, he would have pointed them to the closed grave in which their Lord lay dead.

The result we can conjecture. In that grave, amid the ridicule of the enemies of Christ, would have been buried the hope of the world.

"A plain alternative is before us. If Christ did not rise, in a manner revealing the presence of a power greater than the known forces of the material world, and thus proving the justness of His stupendous claims, a delusion has turned back the entire current of human history and saved the world. If so, in the greatest crisis of the world's history, delusion has been better than knowledge, and error better than truth. If we accept this supposition, we may well be pardoned if we prefer delusion to knowledge, error to truth.

"Note now the logical consequence of the only alternative open to those who deny or doubt that Christ rose from the dead. In all ages men have sought knowledge, and some have made it under difficulties the chief aim of life, in the belief that to know the truth is for man's highest interest, and that the truth is able to repay any price at which it may be purchased. The majesty of truth is now dethroned. For we have seen that it may be either a gain or possibly an infinite injury. This uncertainty makes knowledge unworthy of serious effort, especially of prolonged and diffi-

cult and costly effort. Thus in the closed grave of Christ is buried, not only the world's hope, but the chief stimulus for intelligent research."[4]

We can not accept a theory which thus bereaves Hope and afflicts Truth. We can not leave those angelic forms, like Mary, weeping at the sepulchre in the gray dawn of the morning, declaring, "They have taken away our Lord, and we know not where they have laid him." The voice of history comforts them with authority and tenderness, declaring to them, "the Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon," and "unto James," and unto "all the Apostles," and unto Paul and unto "above five hundred brethren at once," and hath shown himself mighty to save by a a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues.

Surely the God has appeared among men in Jesus of Nazareth, who "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, was raised again the third day and ascended into heaven," leaving trailing clouds of glory behind Him on the earth. Dark indeed were the world if it were not so. All light would be extinguished and even the love of light would

[4] Joseph Agar Beet's "Credentials of the Gospel."

be hopelessly discouraged. If the First-born of Heaven had died, never to rise again, Egyptian darkness would have overspread the earth never to lift, and an inconsolable bereavement would have made a lamentation throughout the universe. But rising He hath brought life and immortality to light, and joy and hope are everywhere.

VIII

HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD? THE TESTIMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."—*St. Peter at Pentecost.*

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." (Acts iv. 13.)

"And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." (Acts iv. 33.)

"A man who will not believe the resurrection of Christ, upon a statement of these facts, would not believe it if he himself should rise from the dead."—*Dr. Robert South.*

VIII

Has God Appeared Among Men? Did Jesus Rise From the Dead? The Testimony of the Evangelists.

In the preceding pages the testimony of the Evangelists has been set aside, and for proof of the resurrection of Jesus, the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul have been alone relied upon. Having thus independently of their testimony established the fact that Jesus rose from the dead, any possible presumptions against the credibility of their writings on account of the record of miracles which they contain is overcome, and we are now in position to consider them as historical documents.

Let the evidences of their genuineness and authenticity be first considered, just as we would consider the proofs of the genuineness and authenticity of the writings of Josephus or Livy, or of the works of any other author, ancient or modern.

For the starting-point of the argument, the year 180 A. D. must be taken, because at that time it is allowed by both believers and unbelievers that the four Gospels, as we have them, were universally accepted in all the churches as the only valid account of the earthly life of

Jesus. At that time the books were reverenced as Holy Scriptures, and their authorship was ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. If they be fraudulent documents, the fraud was concocted and imposed on the churches in the first half of the second century.

St. John died about the year A. D. 100. It is evident that during his lifetime no spurious Gospels, containing false accounts of the life of Jesus, and purporting to be from the pens of himself and of his companions, could have gained general acceptation. The question, therefore, is, Did such unauthorized and untruthful documents spring up between the year 100 A. D. and the year 180 A. D., at which latter date our present Gospels were universally received by the churches?

Before adducing personal testimony in answer to this question, a general observation is pertinent and important: Literary works in days when all books had to be copied by hand attained a general circulation far more slowly than can be easily imagined in this age of the printing-press. The multiplication and distribution of copies of any book, as widely as the Gospels had been scattered by the year 180 A. D. must have been the work of years. Only works of the most commanding interest could attain such a circulation at all. If twenty

years be allowed for this work—in the case of the Gospels, a period none too long—we reduce the period from eighty to sixty years, during which, if they were fabricated by impostors, they must have been produced. Both for the longer and the shorter period positive testimony exists showing conclusively that the Gospels universally accepted in the year 180 A. D. had been known and received from the days of the Apostles, and were none other than the documents which we now have.

The testimony of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, is of the first importance. He knew Polycarp, and Polycarp had known St. John and others "who had seen the Lord." In remonstrating with Florinus, one of his early friends, who had fallen into heresy, contrary to the teaching of the "Elders who also were disciples of the Apostles," he says: "I can describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and his manner of life, and his personal appearance, and the discourses which he held before the people, and how he would describe his intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate their words."

Is it probable or possible that Irenaeus would have allowed the genuineness and au-

thenticity of spurious Gospels—especially one claiming John for its author—of which Polycarp had known nothing, and which he therefore never acknowledged? Could Polycarp have been deceived about such a grave matter, and if he was not deceived, could his pupil, who professes such vivid recollections of him, have been deceived? Let us hear, then, what Irenaeus says. In his great work, "Against Heresies," in which he uses the books of the New Testament as freely and with the same reverence as a modern theologian of the most orthodox school, he declares of the four Gospels: "So firm is the ground on which these Gospels rest that the very heretics themselves bear witness to them, and, starting from these documents, each one of them endeavors to establish his own peculiar doctrine."[1]

In the passage from which this quotation is taken, he goes on to name the four Gospels by the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and to insist that there could be only four Gospels. The fanciful reason which he gives for this view concerning their number in nowise weakens the force of his testimony to the fact of their existence, but does rather immensely strengthen it, for when a fact is made the basis

[1] Irenaeus's "Against Heresies" (Ante-Nicene Library), Vol. I., page 292.

of a theory, the fact itself is evidently beyond dispute.

Again, Clement of Alexandria, who presided over a great Christian school in that city from A. D. 190 to A. D. 203, tells us that the motive for writing his "*Stromata*" was that in his old age he might not forget the great discourses he had heard in early manhood from men who had derived the tradition of the faith from the Apostles, Peter, James, John and Paul. In that work, when commenting upon a statement in an apocryphal Gospel, he remarks that it is not found "in the four Gospels which have been handed down to us."[2]

To the same purpose speaks Tertullian of Carthage, who lived between the years 150 A. D. to 220 A. D. In his treatise against Marcion he affirms that the four Gospels have existed from "the very beginning," and are "coeval with the churches themselves,"[3] referring particularly to the churches founded by the Apostles in person.

Let the testimony of Justin Martyr next be taken. He was put to death for being a Christian not later than 166 A. D., when, after extensive studies in various schools of philosophy, he had been converted about A. D. 130. In his *First Apology*, he tells us: "On the day

[2] Stromata, 111, 553 (Potter Ed.). [3] Adv. Marcion iv. 5.

called Sunday, all who live in cities, or in the country, gather together to one place, and the *Memoirs* of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits." Again, as showing what he meant by "Memoirs," he says: "The Apostles, in the Memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them." In another place he characterizes them as "Memoirs drawn up by the Apostles and those who followed them." In his writings there are 196 references to things recorded in our present Gospels, showing clearly the source from which he drew his knowledge of apostolic days and the high esteem in which he held it. The *Diatessaron* of Tatian, who was a pupil of Justin, shows that the "Memoirs" to which he alludes were the four Gospels. Tatian combined the Gospels into one narrative—a sort of harmony—which strangely enough begins with the opening passage of John's Gospel, about which there has been so much controversy.

Omitting to consider the evidence for the genuineness of the Gospels which might be adduced from the quotations from them made by Polycarp and other Apostolic Fathers, and from the use made of them by heretical leaders, such as Marcion, in the first half of the second cen-

tury, we pass on to examine the testimony of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, who was born sometime between A. D. 60 and A. D. 70, and who published a book entitled, "An Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord," about A. D. 133. This work of Papias has been lost, the latest record of the existence of the book itself being that it was in the Cathedral at Nismes, A. D. 1218. But fragments of it have been preserved by Eusebius, from which "It appears that (1) Papias knew men who were friends of many of the original Apostles; that (2) he knew two women who were daughters of the Apostle Philip; that (3) he knew two men who were immediate disciples of the Lord; that (4) he had tried to learn from all these persons what they could tell him about Christ, and about what had been said by the Apostles about Christ; and that (5) he had used what they had told him in his Exposition."[1] This ancient writer, as quoted by Eusebius, says: "And the Elder (the Elder John) said this also: 'Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without, however, recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor

[1] Dr. R. W. Dale's "Living Christ and the Four Gospels," page 226.

did he follow Him, but afterwards as I said (attended) Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs (of his hearers) but had no design of giving a connected account of the Lord's oracles (or discourses).' So, then, Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his one care not to omit anything he heard, or to set down any false statement therein." Concerning the Gospel by Matthew, he says: "So then Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language and each one interpreted them as he could."[5]

After all that hostile critics have been able to suggest to impair the force of this testimony of Papias, it remains as immovable evidence establishing the existence of these Gospels in the early part of the Second Century, connecting them immediately with apostolic authorship, and placing them upon the level of divine "Oracles." And "Oracles" was the title given to sacred books. To Paul, the ancient scriptures of the Jewish people were "Oracles of God." To Philo, the great Jewish scholar of Alexandria, the narrative parts of the Old Testament, as well as the words of Jehovah, were "Oracles." To Clement of Rome, the Jewish Scriptures were also "Oracles of God."

[5] Euseb. Hist. Eccl., vi. 30.

"When Papias gives this great title to the narratives of Matthew and Mark, he attributes to them the same dignity, the same authority, the same sacredness, that was attributed to the books of the Old Testament."[6] Is it possible that books held in such reverence and affection by Papias and his contemporaries as late as 135 A. D. could have been absolutely lost, and other documents of a less commanding character have usurped their names and occupied their place in all the Christian churches in less than fifty years thereafter? It is incredible! One might as well believe that "The Code Napoleon" displaced the Constitution of the United States in the mind of the people of the United States, sometime between the days of President Jackson and President Garfield, without attracting the notice of the highest legal authorities, or incurring the opposition of the nation.

And now, with all the testimonies before us—the combined evidence of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Tatian and Papias—not to mention such proof as is found in the writings of Marcion, and the document discovered by Bryennios at Constantinople as late as 1881, entitled "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," which carries us back

[6] Dr. R. W. Dale's "Living Christ and the Four Gospels," page 243.

as far as A. D. 140, and perhaps to A. D. 120 —can we reasonably doubt that the Gospels which were universally accepted in A. D. 180 and which have come down to us, are both genuine and authentic? Is it not indisputable that men who had known Apostles and others who had known companions of the Apostles declare that written records of the life of Jesus by apostolic authors existed in their day and from the very beginning of Christianity? Did the universal church, including churches so widely separated as Hierapolis, Carthage, Alexandria, Lyons, Corinth and Ephesus, suffer these original works of apostolic authority to perish, and fall with unimaginable haste to copying and circulating spurious Gospels as the "Oracles of God," so that in the year 180 A. D. the genuine Gospels had entirely disappeared? What motive induced such a revolution among the immediate followers of the Apostles in the early days of the second century? Who were the men equal to such a task? How did such remarkable men incline to hide themselves and how did they manage to conceal themselves so perfectly, that all the scholars of the ages, including the microscopic critics of modern rationalism, have failed to uncover and identify them? How did they succeed in accomplishing so great a fraud in an age when

there were no printing-presses, and when copyists, who issued so many Gospels that all the churches came to possess their fraudulent books, would have been so open to discovery and so easy of detection? Truly, as Dr. Dale says: "That books which commanded such affection and reverence among the friends of men who had known the original Apostles—books to which they attributed so great an authority, books which they regarded as Sacred Scriptures—should have been suffered to disappear within a single generation, leaving no trace behind them, and that they should have been immediately replaced by other books inheriting their names and inheriting their sacredness; that the Christian churches in every part of the world, in Rome, in Carthage, in Alexandria, in Jerusalem, in Asia Minor, in Southern Gaul, should have silently consented to part with the old Gospels and to receive the new; and that they should all have believed that the new were the same as the old—this is impossible. Strip the theory of the infinite ingenuity, the learning, the brilliance of exposition by which its real form and nature have been concealed, and it ceases to be even arguable. The miracles recorded in the Four Gospels, these are credible; but the miracles which this hypothesis requires

us to receive are incredible. For, if it is true, then there was a suspension of some of the most ordinary and certain laws of human thought and conduct, a suspension extending over many years and operating in tens of thousands of men, belonging to different races and living in many lands. This is asking men to believe too much; the demands of the new criticism are more exorbitant than the demands of the old faith."[7]

Besides this positive testimony of personal witnesses to the genuineness and authenticity of the Four Gospels, the books contain internal evidences—local and personal references, individual peculiarities and striking coincidences, such as no counterfeiter of a later day could have brought into them—which confirm the conclusion that, as they were held by the churches 180 A. D., and as they are known to us to-day, they are the work of the writers whose names they bear, and are trustworthy memoirs of the life of Jesus.

But if the date and authorship of these Gospels were a matter of insoluble doubt and indeterminable uncertainty, there is no good reason to question the general trustworthiness of their statements. From them we derive all we

[7] "The Living Christ and the Four Gospels," pages 244, 245.

know of Jesus, a character so real and so unimaginable that no writer could have invented it. No other tradition of Him was accepted by either the friends or foes of Christianity in the second century, and no other has been allowed at any subsequent time. Whether these documents are, or are not, the work of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; whether they are, or are not, inspired; whether "Oracles of God" or compositions of men, they are the testimony of very ancient writers to the life, the words, and the deeds of Jesus, the eminent Jew, who appeared in Palestine during the reign of Tiberius, and whose history has so mightily affected all subsequent times.

The question before us now is: Did these writers speak the truth when they affirmed that after his crucifixion under Pontius Pilate, his death and his burial, he rose from the dead?

They are to be believed, unless it can be shown that they intended to deceive, or were themselves deceived.

If they intended to deceive, how shall we account for their general tone of candor and truthfulness? They tell their story in the dispassionate manner of truthful witnesses. They indulge in no epithets or eulogies. Is this the manner of men when perpetrating a fraud—and a fraud so great?

Claiming to be actors in the story which they tell, they relate things discreditable to themselves. They report their worldly ambitions and sinful rivalries, and faithfully give the reproofs which Jesus administered to them. They tell how one of their number denied Him and that at the last they all forsook Him and fled. Now, if these writings are from the Apostles themselves they show a stern honesty utterly incompatible with intentional deceit. If, on the other hand, they are the pseudonymous productions of men writing under apostolic names, it is required to show why impostors would write books intended to circulate among the followers of the Apostles and insert in them accounts derogatory of them? How would this commend the books to their followers? Would any impostor—least of all one capable of composing either of the Gospels, ever hit upon such a device, or rather ever perpetrate such a blunder?

Moreover, men who propagated such a story as the resurrection, at the time when these Gospels were put forth, could not have escaped persecution for their pains. Martyrdom was most frequently the price paid for giving such testimony. Is there anything in conscious deceit of the most stupendous character to inspire, or sustain, the martyr spirit? Are false-

hoods uttered to incur or to escape pain? Are they invented to secure self-advantage or impose self-sacrifice?

All the circumstantial surroundings amid which the facts of the resurrection are placed by the narratives of the Evangelists exclude the possibility of fraud or delusion. Jesus dies at the time of the Passover, the greatest feast of the Jews, which drew thousands to Jerusalem, where he was tried and executed. His trial and crucifixion by the civil government, at the instigation of the Sanhedrim, made it an object of interest to all the inhabitants of the city and to the visitors to the feast. The nation for months had been agitated by his ministry, and he had entered the city shortly before his trial amid the hosannas of the multitude. The story of his resurrection was anticipated by his enemies, and precautions taken against the possibility of its being believed. He was buried, the sepulchre was sealed with the proconsular seal, and a guard was set to watch it. Now, with the body of Jesus thus entombed and guarded, one of three things must have taken place, viz.: (1) The body lay in the sepulchre; (2) it was stolen away; (3) or he rose from the dead.

Did it continue in the sepulchre and return to dust? If so, how shall we account for the

existence and faith of the Church at Jerusalem, which we have seen from the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul sprang into being immediately after the crucifixion? Why did not the enemies of the new and disquieting doctrine produce the body and thus summarily end the mischievous superstition? What rallied so quickly the followers who forsook him and fled at the first approach of the soldiers who arrested him and carried him from Gethsemane to his trial?

Was the body stolen away? How could anyone have spirited it away without detection at the time of the Passover when the full moon made the nights like day, and the attention of thousands was fixed on that sepulchre in the garden, around which a company of Roman soldiers kept watch? But if it were stolen, who committed the theft? His enemies? Then, why did they not produce it as soon as the resurrection—which, if it were indeed a fact, implicated them in a monstrous crime—was proclaimed in their city? They had every motive to have produced it, and no earthly reason for not bringing it forth, if they had it! And if he rose not, they could have had it, if they desired it.

Did his disciples steal it? If so, how did they elude the guard? By bribery? For that

they were too poor. Did they force the guard? For that they were too timid. But if they obtained it by either bribery or force, or by both, why were they never charged with the offense, and executed for it, as they most assuredly would have been if guilt could have been fixed upon them?

But, again, if they had on their hands the mangled, lifeless, putrefying body of Jesus, whence came the faith in their hearts? Whence their courage? Whence their zeal? Whence the power over the people—over some even who were concerned in the crucifixion of their Lord—so that they were able to establish churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, and the cities of Galatia and Macedonia, ultimately establishing a church even in the great and distant capital, Rome? Could a conscious fraud so revive and invigorate them, raising their natural abilities to almost infinite powers? Could a delusion so enthrall and empower them? Did an hallucination ever so stimulate faith, elevate virtue and conquer the world?

The facts of the case admit of but one explanation. Jesus rose from the dead. From different lines of investigation—from the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul and from the unaffected narratives of the Evangelists—we reach the same conclusion. It must be so. Nothing else

can be true. "The world itself is changed, and is no more the same that it was; it has never been the same since Jesus left it. The air is charged with heavenly odors, and a kind of celestial consciousness, a sense of other worlds, is wafted on us in its breath."[8] "We have not followed cunningly devised fables." (2 Peter i. 16.) "He has received from God the Father honor and glory." (2 Peter i. 11.) He is convincingly "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans i. 4.)

[8] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural."

IX

HAS GOD APPEARED AMONG MEN? THE WITNESS OF HISTORY TO THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."—*Epistle to the Hebrews.*

"The greatest of the proofs of Jesus Christ are the prophecies. . . . Even if one man had made a book of predictions of Jesus Christ as to the time and manner of his coming, and if Jesus Christ had come in conformity with these prophecies, this would be of infinite weight. But there is here a great deal more. There is a succession of men who, during four thousand years, constantly and without variation, come one after another, predicting the same event. There is a whole people which announces him, and which subsists during four thousand years in order still to render their testimony of the assurances which they have of him, from which they can not be turned aside by any menaces or any persecutions which befell them."—*Pascal.*

"The memory of His life has been like the perfume of another world, and all history is incomprehensive without Him."—*Renan.*

The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. (Revelation xi. 15.)

IX

Has God Appeared Among Men? The Witness of History to the Divinity of Jesus.

A recent God is a pretender, a worn-out God has abdicated, a transient God is a provisional sovereign, and a local God is a provincial ruler. The true God can be none of these. He is not recent, but from everlasting to everlasting. There is no past during which he did not rule. He is not obsolete, but the Eternal "I Am." There is no present from which he is absent. He is not transient, for his dominion is "an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away." No future shall ever come over which he will not be regnant. He is not local, for his name is excellent in all the earth and his glory is set above the heavens. No part of the earth or the universe ever was, or ever can be, beyond his presence and his power. When he appears among men, if he should appear, all history, past, present and future must witness to him as to One whose purpose runs through the ages and whose appearance to mortal men is in furtherance of that purpose. There must be cosmical congruity in his manifestation,

otherwise men will perceive two Gods—a God of Providence moving in one direction, and a God of Revelation working in another—or they will perceive the appearance of a double-minded God. Is there such congruity in the case of Jesus? Does the history of the world witness to His Divinity?

By marvelous mathematics, astronomers, witnessing the perturbations of heavenly bodies visible to them, have located planets before being able to bring them within the range of telescopic vision. They have surveyed the heavens and said, "Here a planet ought to be," and behold, a more penetrating gaze has discovered it where and when they said it should appear! It was thus Professors Adams and Leverrier discovered the planet Neptune, by the perturbations of Uranus. May the careful student of history so calculate for the appearance of Jesus? Were there perturbations in advance of Him which pointed to Him? Were there conjunctions in the age of Tiberius which called for Him? Do succeeding ages require Him for their explanation? Is he indeed, as Luthardt claims, "the end to which all ancient history tended," and "the starting-point from which all modern history begins"?

If so, we have a sublime witness to his divinity which can never be obscured and which

can never be successfully denied. Before our faith thenceforth advances a pillar of cloud and of fire, unmistakably charged with the divine presence.

Certainly if we may trust the Gospels as narratives, or the four undisputed epistles of Paul as records of faith, this was the claim which Jesus made for himself touching his position in history, and which his followers afterwards insisted was a claim well founded.

In defending one of the cures which he had wrought, Jesus said of God: "My father worketh even until now and I work" (John v. 17, Revised Version), thus associating himself with an active God who had never ceased to work, and declaring his own deeds as being of a piece with, and in continuance of, the activities of that Divine Agent. Again, he declared, "Before Abraham was I am" (John viii. 58)—a declaration which not only suggested to his hearers the Great "I am" of Moses at the burning bush, but which set himself before them as one anterior to their national founder and their national history, the God of nations as well as the God of Israel. He laid special claim to having been anticipated in the history, literature and religion of the Hebrew nation, and to being the fulfiller of their hopes and the subject of their prophecies, say-

ing, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matthew v. 17.) And again, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

He is immediately preceded by a forerunner, John the Baptist, whose sole office is to prepare his way before him and who connects him with prophetic utterances which had been current in Israel for several centuries before Him: "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Mark i. 2, 3.) He identifies this prophet of the wilderness with the prophets who had in former centuries appeared in Israel, and makes John the terminal link by which he himself was bound to a living and unbroken chain of supernatural events and utterances: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." (Matthew xi. 13.) He declares of the Baptist that he was "a prophet" and "more than a prophet," and the Baptist in turn connects Him with the Paschal lamb, which was the chiefest memorial of the Exodus from Egypt and the central offering of Israel's wor-

ship and hope, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.)

He not only claims to be the fulfiller of Israel's past prophecies, and the Messiah which satisfied the mind and heart of John, the greatest of all prophets present in his time; but he projects his claims into the future, affirming, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew xxiv. 35.) He commands his disciples to teach his words to the nations, and promises to be with them always, even unto the end of the world. (Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.) At the outset of his ministry he is as confident of his enduring influence as at its close. In the Sermon on the Mount he declares that in the final judgment the fate of souls will be fixed by the fact of obedience or disobedience to "these sayings of mine" (Matthew vii. 24)—"sayings" which he makes of equal authority with the will of the "Father which is in heaven."

The same sublime claim, that He was the fulfiller of the past, God manifest in the present, and the hope of the future, his followers made on his behalf. St. Peter writes of the salvation offered by him: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should

come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Enlarging the circle of Christ's connection and the sweep of his authority to supramundane spheres, the Apostle adds, "which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Peter i. 10-12.)

Paul identifies him with the promise to Abraham (Galatians iii. 16), and makes an allegory of the Abrahamic history to enforce the freedom of faith under Christ. (Galatians iv. 22-31.) In his great argument for the resurrection he sets forth that momentous fact not as an isolated marvel, having no roots in the past, but declares, "he rose again the third day *according to the Scriptures.*" (1 Corinthians xv. 4.) He tells the Romans that the hope of the Gospel had been promised by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures. (Romans i. 2.)

To the same purpose speak all the writers of the New Testament. The first teachers of Christianity did not renounce their inheritance

in the past or in the faith of the Hebrew nation. They did not repudiate it as a bygone superstition. They preached first and everywhere in the Synagogues, and reasoned with the people from the cogent premises of invincible Scriptures. The writer of the Acts gives us a typical instance: "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." (Acts xvii. 1-3.)

This amazing claim of fulfilling the past is peculiar to Christianity. It is in this particular unique among the religions which have challenged the attention and demanded the submission of mankind. "Mohammedanism burst upon a terrified and astonished world without any voice or note of preparation, like the flash of its founder's sword. Judaism in its most distinctive and essential form was given to Israel but fifty days after the Exodus, and before that time Israel was not a nation. Of the origin of Brahmanism and Buddhism we know too little to speak with much definiteness; but there is

no vestige of preparation for one or the other in what we know of either."[1]

Moreover, these religions have shown themselves less than divine in that they have not been able to overcome the wideness of the earth nor resist the ravages of time. They are covered all over with the leprous taint of the natural which is slowly but surely disintegrating them, and they cry from afar as the investigator approaches them, "Unclean! Unclean!" Space and time have taken the crowns from their heads, and the eternities disown them. They flee the light of modern civilization and crouch in an outer darkness, helpless and hopeless; while Christianity, claiming to be endowed as the heir of the ages, unembarrassed under the glowing noontide of history, plans for the redemption of the world by the forces of a Kingdom which it declares shall never end.

Can this amazing claim be made good? Is the Jesus of the Evangelists the Desire of all nations, the Messiah of the Hebrew prophets, and the Christ of history? If he is not, though the fact of his resurrection be established and the evidences of his power be all around us, they are mere blinding flashes which do but confuse and terrify us! We can not at this

[1] "Characteristics of Christianity," by Stanley Leathes, D.D., page 3.

point in the world's history send to him even the inquiry of the Baptist, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" It is too late for another to come. If another should come all the presumptions would be against him, and he would stand no chance in a contest with Jesus for the acceptance of mankind. "It were easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky, separating and expunging one of the colors, than to get the character of Jesus out of the world!"[2] If Jesus be not God, He who is God has waited too long to come to the earth to make his coming worth while. The race of man would now meet him with fierce indignation or languid indifference, declaring "hope deferred hath made the heart sick"—too sick for healing or for love. If Jesus be not God, He who is God has lost his chance with men. He has disappointed the past, the world forces of the present are bent away from him, and the future is irretrievably lost to him. Jesus has shut up the world, when the case eventually reaches its final issue, to atheism or faith in Him, because the world's history has no centre nor purpose if it is not organized around Him.

Is history atheistic or Christian? Have events fallen out in a purposeless, haphazard fashion, or have they marched from the begin-

[2] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 331.

ning, and do they continue to advance to "a divine event," the coronation of Jesus as God over all, blessed forevermore?

Let us attend to the facts:

1. Before and since Christ all nations have believed in the existence of a God. Plutarch's famous words are true for all lands and for all times: "You may see cities without walls, without laws, without coins, without writing; but a people without a God, without prayer, without religious exercises and sacrifices has no man seen."

2. Efforts to approach God by prayer and sacrifices are universal, and the hope that the God will approach men in an incarnation is common to all nations. Observation of this fact justified Luthardt's great generalization, "God and man can not remain apart from each other, can not maintain indifference toward each other; they struggle towards each other from an intrinsic necessity, they exist for each other; for God will be the God of man, and man is to be the man of God."[3]

3. It is not more clearly written in Scripture than in history that the universal belief of man is "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." So deep-seated is this conviction that it has overcome the strong passion of

[3] "The Fundamental Truths of Christianity," page 131.

ownership and led men to sacrifice hecatombs of birds and beasts upon altars to their gods. Man might be tracked through history by the blood from his sacrifices. He has seemed to feel that to appease the invisible God it was necessary for him to expel from living bodies the invisible life, and send it into the unseen world bruised and crying that it might plead on his behalf for pardon in that unearthly realm. Not in anger nor heartlessness, but in unutterable agony he has sometimes laid his hand upon human beings, even the children of his loins and the companions of his soul, that even they might bear his plea for mercy to God, and might intercede for him with groanings that could not be uttered. Nor did one offering suffice. The sacrifices of one day called for others the next. Human sacrifices were felt eventually to be inferior to the requirements of the case. A divine sufferer was called for. Mackay affirms that "the notion of a suffering deity was wide-spread, extending from Judea westward including Scythians, Asians and Arabians."

4. There was one nation with whom this idea of a divine sufferer was ever present. It overlay their minds beyond the limits of consciously definite thought, as a nebulous but ineradicable conviction. It was central to their

political system (if such they may be said to have had) and penetrated their national life. It dominated their literature, and found expression particularly in the books of their prophets. In short this "lonely people with their lonely book" seemed to exist for the sake of this idea. One of their number characterized it as "the hope of Israel." (Acts xxviii. 20.) This hope of a coming Messiah cheered and sustained the nation in its periods of direst calamity and deepest defeats. Standing in the midst of the moral decay and political desolation—always around when one of them appeared—the prophets of Israel comforted themselves and encouraged their contemporaries with visions of the coming Deliverer. Without regard to the authorship or date of any of these prophecies, the Messianic hope is in them all, and they were in existence before the time of Jesus, and a Greek translation of them—the Septuagint—was at that time in common use among the Jews. These prophets looked up to this vision of a Messiah as to "one standing on a high peak reporting of the sunrise to men in the dark valley. . . . . They saw upon his countenance the glow of the dawn, and dazzling all about Him, the incommunicable splendours of a new day."[4]

[4]Van Dyke's "Gospel for an Age of Doubt," page 70—an allusion to Jesus as he appeared to his early disciples.

5. Before Jesus appeared this Messianic hope of Israel had gotten abroad among other nations, and there was a general expectation that about that time the Deliverer for whom the world had yearned, and for whom Israel in particular had hoped, would appear in Judea. "Suetonius (B. C. 13) made a collection of Sibyls which were extensively circulated, and which predicted the coming of a great King out of Judea, who should in power and glory reign over the whole earth. This expectation, founded on what Tacitus calls the 'sacerdotal books,' was so prevalent and persistent that when Cæsar Augustus assumed the office of Pontifex Maximus, or High Priest of Rome, he issued orders calling in all these prophetic books; some two thousand copies thus collected were publicly burned."[5]

6. Among the Jews there was a peculiar state of expectancy. Holy men waited for the consolation of Israel (Luke ii. 25) and the common people dreamed of one near at hand who should redeem Israel. (Luke xxiv. 21.) If a remarkable teacher appeared the official classes felt it necessary to inquire if he were not the Messiah. (John i. 19, 20.) The atmosphere

[5] "The God Man," by L. T. Townsend, D.D., page 172.

of the times was heavy with the hope that the Messiah was at hand.

7. About that time a great preacher appeared and roused the Jewish people to a state of excitement such as they had never known. He disclaimed Messiahship, and with unimaginable modesty and self-renunciation said of Jesus of Nazareth, "He must increase, but I must decrease," and encouraged his disciples to leave him and attach themselves to Christ. (John iii. 25-36.)

Let this suffice for the history before Christ. If he be not God, towards whom did pre-Christian history thus point? Was it but a mighty maze and all without a plan? It is not a piece with post-Christian history. The Messianic expectation is now entirely disappeared from the Pagan world; has that bright ray perished in rayless gloom, or has it been lost in the dawn? Bloody sacrifices have ceased among the Jews, and indeed wherever Christianity has gone,—almost now from the world. Who wrenched the sacrificial knife from the hands of mankind and sheathed it? Israel has fallen on days when a new prophecy of the Messiah, if the Messiah has not already come, is more sorely needed than ever before. Scattered in every land, without a temple and without a priest, this companionless people wanders and waits! Why

are all its prophetic voices hushed when they are the most sorrowfully needed?

What of that strangest of Israel's prophets, John the Baptist? What a ghastly and unaccountable being is he if Jesus is not the hoped-for Messiah? What was his spiritual ancestry and how comes it that this mightiest prophet made no disciples? To what order of sequence does he belong? How shall he be placed in history?

If Jesus be not God ancient history is the record of a mutilated plan which the God tried, and abandoned as impracticable, after shedding the blood of millions of sacrifices, and after, by it, raising and disappointing the fairest hope of the noblest of mankind.

The contemporaneous history of the time of Jesus we will now consider.

1. Just before he comes among men, we find the people of the nation to which he belonged, and which had been remarkably preserved through fifteen centuries before his time, beginning to scatter. They and their Scriptures and their synagogues were found in all the principal cities of the world. So when the Apostles went forth with the Gospel they found places of worship and assemblies of hearers ready for their new and startling message.

2. The Alexandrian conquests had carried

the Grecian language and philosophy throughout the world, and that philosophy had dethroned the Pagan deities. Unbelief was prevalent everywhere.

3. The Roman Empire was as universal as the Greek language and the Greek philosophy. The agents of the world-wide faith had thus their way opened to preach to all nations, for the pass of a Roman citizen was everywhere acknowledged.

4. It was a time of general peace.

Do not these world-wide conjunctions, brought to pass without human intention, indeed without the comprehension of the human instruments by whom they were produced, seem to be a visible preparation for the Messiah so long hoped for? "Why else do they concur in time when they might as well have happened centuries apart? Whence comes it, when human history has been brewing in so great a ferment, for so many ages, all these great preparations should just now be ready, calling for the King with their common voice, and saying, 'The fullness of time is come.'"[6]

Critics need not carp at the story of the Wise Men and the Star of Bethlehem. Here are conjunctions more marvelous than any that ever shone in the firmament. By the cradle

[6] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," pages 417, 418.

of Jesus stood the majestic figures of Hebrew Faith, Grecian Language, Hellenistic Philosophy, and Roman Law—mightier figures than the Eastern Magi—and assembled around Him by the hand which made the world.

What of modern history?

If ancient history testified to Jesus, and gasping in death cried "Behold the Lamb," much more does modern history reveal his power and disclose his divinity. In modern times the triumphs of Christianity have been nothing short of the miraculous.

In spite of the providential preparation of the world for his coming, on every theory of human probability Jesus was foredoomed to failure if he were not God. This will be manifest if we consider the nature of the Gospel, the opposition it incurred and the human instruments by which its success was achieved.

1. The central facts of his Gospel were offensive to both the Jewish and Pagan mind. The doctrine of a crucified and risen Messiah was, as Paul declared, a "stumbling-block to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile." The struggle with the Judaizers and the Gnostics concerning the person of Christ as the God-Man, with which the church contended until the Council of Chalcedon, and which has really continued until this day in all the forms of modern Unitarianism, shows how unacceptable

to the carnal mind is the idea of a crucified Saviour.

2. His ethical requirements of poverty of spirit, purity of heart, humility, self-denial and cross-bearing were repugnant to an age which one of its most discriminating historians characterized as "corrupted and corrupting."

3. The opposition of political ambition and ecclesiastical jealousy rose up against him. They met him in His infancy with the slaughter of the innocents of Bethlehem on his account, and followed him to his tomb in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. He forewarned his disciples that they advanced to a similar fate. He sent them forth as lambs among wolves, charged with the superhuman task of converting wolves into lambs. The event justified his prediction. Stephen and James met martyrdom before the Gospel had created a single church beyond the limits of Palestine.

4. The instruments which he employed, humanly speaking, were contemptible and inadequate. Ignorant and unlettered men were sent on a mission which would have been impossible of achievement by all the philosophers of Greece supported by the legions of the Cæsars.

And yet in three centuries they so far succeeded that the Emperor Constantine was constrained to profess obedience to the faith—if sincerely, a wonder; and if insincerely, then coerced by an imperial public opinion, and therefore a still greater wonder.

The limits of this discussion do not admit of either a quantitative or qualitative analysis of the triumphs of Jesus in all the centuries since then. Large volumes could not contain the records of such an investigation. The books which have been produced by his influence make immense libraries. The songs inspired by his Spirit fill the earth with melody. He has set the cross everywhere—the cross, once so despised. The instrument of his shame is seen in all lands as the thrilling symbol of an all-conquering faith. The very dates of the world do him reverence. The folding doors of the world's history are inscribed respectively "Before Christ" and "Anno Domini." The ancient world went to sleep in his cradle and the modern world awaked out of his grave.

The testimony of Napoleon the Great, spoken to Count Montholon on the island of St. Helena, is a just conclusion concerning the majesty and divinity of Jesus as revealed in history. He is said to have inquired "Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was?" and when a nega-

tive answer was given to the question, he began: "Well then, I will tell you. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and myself have founded great Empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him . . . . I think I understand something of human nature; and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man. None else is like him; Jesus Christ was more than man. I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me . . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, of my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them I lighted up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. . . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards the Unseen that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy. He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to himself.

He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith his demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space the soul of man with all its powers and faculties becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in him experience that remarkable supernatural love towards him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ."

The conclusion is irresistible and inevitable. The Jesus of the Gospels is the God of providence. "We turn ourselves to the courses and the grand events of human history, all that we include in the providential history of the world —the wars, diplomacies, emigrations, revolutions, discoveries and scientific developments of the world—and we are immediately met by some wonderful consent or understanding between Christianity and the providential courses of things. Christianity is in form the Supernatural kingdom and working of God in the earth. It begins with a supernatural advent

of divinity and closes with a supernatural exit of divinity; and the divine visitant thus entered into the world, and going out from it, is himself a divine miracle in his own person; his works are miracles and his doctrine quite as truly, and the whole transaction taken as a movement on the world, or in it, not of it, supposes in fact a new and superior kind of administration, instituted by God himself."[1]

The government of the world is evidently with Jesus. "He being," as Jean Paul Richter beautifully says, "the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, has lifted with his pierced hand empires off their hinges, has turned the stream of centuries out of its channel and still governs the ages."

The Jesus of the Evangelists is the God of the world's history.

[1] Bushnell's "Nature and the Supernatural," page 412.

X

WHEN GOD WAS AMONG MEN DID HE APPROVE ANY SACRED BOOKS? THE WITNESS OF JESUS TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—*Jesus.*

"Let, then, the Prince of Life, the Light of the world, reckon all of us as his scholars. What he believed let us receive. What he respected let us revere. Let us press to our sickly hearts that word to which he submitted his Saviour heart, and all the thoughts of his holy humanity, and to it let us subject all the thoughts of our fallen humanity."—*Gaussen.*

"There is not the least doubt that the Apostles, and, as a rule, the Christians of their time, held the words of Scripture to be not the words of men but the words of God."—*Reuss.*

X

When God Was Among Men Did He Approve any Sacred Books? The Witness of Jesus to the Old Testament.

"God owes it to mankind not to lead them into error," says Pascal.

We have considered the evidences that establish that Jesus was a divine person. His unearthly character and his indisputable resurrection from the dead utterly forbid his classification with men. The existence of the church from a few months after the crucifixion until this day, and the persistence of Christianity contrary to every human probability and even possibility, are living miracles of ever-increasing wonder, which quite apart from the personal testimony of Apostles long since disappeared from the earth are convincing evidences that he rose from the dead and is therefore God over all. The witness of history from the beginning of the world shows him to be nothing less than the Majestic Personality who has always overshadowed and directed the movement of mankind, moulding its forces, however widely separated in time and space, into one harmonious

whole, and informing it with a moral purpose which runs through the ages.

It is incredible that such an One should "lead mankind into error." But if the Hebrew Scriptures be not such a revelation as mankind may safely follow without danger of being misguided, he has led the church, which was founded on the belief that he was God victorious over death and the grave, and he has led the Apostles who founded it, into the gravest of errors —an error already suspected by some men and which must inevitably in process of time become known by all men to the undoing of the church, and the overthrow of Christianity, if not, indeed, to the extirpation of faith from the earth.

When He was among men we find him in nowise slow to expose false teaching concerning religious truth, even though such teaching could be traced "to them of old time," and claim the authority of antiquity for itself. (Matthew v. 21-48.) He did not hesitate to revise the regulations of Moses on occasion, though in doing so he incurred the wrath of his contemporaries who reverenced Moses. (Mark x. 2-9.) At another time he declared in tones of burning indignation of the world's false guides, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." (John x. 8.)

But he who declared himself to be "the Way,

the Truth and the Life" (John xiv. 6), and who on his trial before Pontius Pilate said "to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," gave to the Hebrew Scriptures, known as the "Old Testament," a constant and unbroken testimony of endorsement throughout his entire earthly ministry. In the course of his public teaching he "either cites or refers to passages in the Old Testament Scriptures probably more than four hundred times."[1] When it is remembered that all but one (Acts xx. 35) of his recorded utterances are contained in four brief pamphlets called the Gospels, such a great number of instances in which he gave outright endorsement, or indirect approval, to the Old Testament Scriptures will appear the more remarkable and conclusive. And the fact becomes still more significant, when it is shown that not even once does he make a citation from what is known as "the Apocrypha"—most probably "not even a reference to it or an echo from its words."[2] Nor is the force of this astounding fact diminished by the frank admission that in many instances the exact words, as quoted by Him, are not found in any text of which we have knowledge. The freedom of

[1] Ellicott's "Christus Comprobator," page 91.
[2] Ibid., page 122.

oral utterance, and the application of truths to the peculiarities of special occasions may go far to explain this verbal variation. "It may even be true, as asserted by a very competent writer, that the text of the Hebrew Scriptures in current use in our Lord's days was not the same in all respects as that which we now have—still the deviations when analyzed are of a nature that certainly does not invalidate the general truth of the impression,"[3] that Jesus authenticated the Old Testament as being "Oracles of God."

The force of the argument will be enhanced by particular references:

Immediately after his introduction to the Jewish nation by the public testimony to him, and identification of Him, by John the Baptist, he went into the wilderness to a temptation, so utterly different from all human conceptions of temptation, that the reality of the experience is guaranteed by the impossibility that any man of any age could have invented the story, and least of all that it could have been invented by the Evangelists. Since it was an experience in solitude to which he retired unattended by friend or kinsman, the account of it by the Evangelists must have been derived from Him. There, alone "with the wild beasts" (Mark i. 13), we are told he was approached with sug-

[3] "Ellicott's Christus Comprobator," pages 121, 122.

gestions to evil, every one of which he repelled by appeals to the Scriptures, quoting thrice from the book of Deuteronomy—a book which, we remark in passing, has been the subject of much speculation by the rationalizing critics of the Old Testament.

Shortly after the Temptation he returned to Nazareth, "where he had been brought up; and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias (Isaiah). And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord..... And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke iv. 16-21.) In the progress of the discourse which followed he alluded to the history and miracles of Elijah and Elisha, as set forth in 1 Kings xvii. 9 and 2 Kings v. 14. Behold how he takes his text from that prophet, and from that part of his prophecy (Isaiah lxi. 1) at which the destructive critics have most stumbled, and draws his

proof texts from those narratives which have suffered most at the hands of the modern doctors—the histories upon which they have spent all their critical skill and from which they have risen leaving them nothing bettered but rather the worse for all their treatment.

The Sermon in the Synagogue at Nazareth gave great offense. The people who heard him were "filled with wrath and rose up and thrust him out of the city." (Luke iv. 28, 29.) Thenceforth in so far as it can be said that he had a home, it was at Capernaum. That city became the centre of his evangelistic tours in Palestine, and presently on a hill in the neighborhood of it, the Evangelist Matthew shows him preaching what has been called "The Sermon on the Mount"—a discourse which both Christians and unbelievers unite with one voice in reckoning to be the noblest utterance which ever fell upon the ears of man, to be spoken of forever along with the Ten Commandments of Sinai. He did not proceed far into it until he felt moved to repudiate or revise the teachings of "them of old time." But that no hearer might imagine he was expressing dissent from the Hebrew Scriptures he enters upon that part of the discussion with these words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.

For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." The force of these words is, as may be seen in the word, "verily"—a word he never uses except when he seeks to enforce with solemn emphasis some overwhelming truth, as for example when he instructs Nicodemus concerning the New Birth. It is to be remarked furthermore that near the close of his ministry he uses the same form of speech in predicting the enduring life of his own words, saying, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

In meeting his opponents in public controversy, when of all occasions he must of necessity have been most cautious and convincing, he appealed with confidence to the Old Testament Scriptures, as to a decisive and undebatable standard of truth.

The Sadducees seeking to overthrow the doctrine of the resurrection approached him with the case of a woman successively the wife of seven brothers, and last of all dying herself. They inquired "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven?" He refuted the inference which they sought to draw from the case by the declaration, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." Resting his argument on *a single word* in an histor-

ical passage in the book of Exodus, he overwhelms his adversaries with the question, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." (Matthew xxii. 23-33.) The Evangelist adds not that the Sadducees demurred to the competency of the authority invoked by Him, but adds "And when the multitude heard this they were astonished at his doctrine."

Here then we have one instance at least in which Jesus solemnly affirms God has spoken unto men, and though the word had been originally spoken unto Moses (compare Mark xii. 16, with the accounts as given by Matthew and Luke), and transmitted by writing to the Sadducees, with all the chances incident to copying and preserving the words through the centuries, when it reached them in his day he felt that he might justly describe, it as "that which was spoken unto *you* by God." (Matthew xxii. 31.)

On the same occasion "One of the Scribes came and having heard them reasoning together, and *perceiving that he had answered them well,* asked him, which is the first commandment of all?" (Mark xii. 28.) Jesus answers him with

a quotation from Deuteronomy (vi. 4, 5): "Hear O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." He adds also a citation from Leviticus (xix. 18): "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

At the same time "While the Pharisees," says St. Matthew, "were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies my footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his Son?" (Matthew xxii. 41-46.) The Evangelist remarks upon the incident "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

Commenting upon this remark of the Evangelist the devout Doctor Gaussen of Geneva energetically demands to know: "How happens it, that among those Pharisees none was found to say in reply, 'What! do you mean to insist on a single word, and still more on a term borrowed from a poesy, eminently lyrical, where the royal Psalmist might, without material consequence,

have employed too lively a construction, high-flown expressions, and words which doubtless, he had not theologically pondered before putting them into his verses? Would you follow such a mode of minutely interpreting each expression as is at once fanatical and servile? Would you worship the letter of the Scriptures to such an extreme? Would you build a whole doctrine upon a word?"[4] Speaking more judicially concerning this use of Psalm CX. by Jesus, Bishop Ellicott says: "What we may deduce from this particular passage is this: First, that the Psalm was written by David, and that thus this particular superscription is right, Secondly, that David was here writing by direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thirdly, that the reference to the Messiah is so distinct, that David may be regarded as consciously speaking of Him."[5]

The enforced silence of the adversaries of Jesus—no man among them "from that day forth durst ask him any more questions" (Matthew xxii. 46; Luke xx. 40)—is conclusive proof that the divine authority of the Jewish Scriptures was universally acknowledged when he was living in Palestine, and that far from dis-

[4] Gaussen's "Theopneustia," page 99.
[5] "Christus Comprobator," page 174.

senting from this view of their character he constantly appealed to it and relied upon it. The complete triumph of his method—a victory carefully noted by both Matthew and Luke—the latter using the strong words "after that they durst not ask him anything"—is full of far-reaching significance. May we not ask if that which was the end of controversy then ought not to be so now?

Passing over the multitude of other similar instances of Christ's appealing to and approving the Old Testament, the consideration of this branch of our investigation may close with two incidents which belong to the period of the memorable forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. That period seems to have been spent by him in confirming the faith of his followers with many "infallible proofs" (Acts i. 3) of his resurrection, and in giving commandments concerning the spread of his gospel and the establishing of his church in the world "unto the Apostles whom he had chosen."

On one of these days—the third after the Crucifixion and the first after the Resurrection—two of his followers were on the way to a village called Emmaus, "which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs." They were "sad" and perplexed "communing and reasoning" together about the strange events of the

hour when "Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him." Inquiring the cause of their sadness and perplexity, he elicited from them the story of how "Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," had been condemned to death and crucified though they had trusted that he might have been the Messiah who should have redeemed their nation. They told him also of the Resurrection which had been reported by certain women of their company, of the vision of angels and of the report of certain men who had gone to the sepulchre and found it even as the women had said, but who had failed to see their Risen Lord. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke xxiv. 13-27.)

On a later occasion while eating a simple meal with certain of his followers, whom he declared should become witnesses unto him among all nations beginning at Jerusalem, "he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all

things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke xxiv. 44-45.) It will be observed that with particularity of description he identifies and approves the Hebrew Canon — "Moses," "the Prophets," "the Psalms"—they were all of it.

Is there room left for doubt that if Jesus did not believe the Old Testament to be a revelation from God he purposely led his foes, his followers, and all the people who heard him into error? If there still be room for doubt, let us see if we can find what the wisest among them did actually believe and teach on the subject subsequently. That will show that, if Jesus did not deceive them, he at least left them victims—life-long victims—of the popular delusion of their day concerning the authority of the Scriptures.

The preacher of the Pentecost, Simon son of Jonas (whose noble confession at Cæsarea Philippi, a few weeks before the Crucifixion, evoked the warm eulogy of his Master) on the memorable occasion when three thousand souls in the city of Jerusalem turned abruptly from Judaism to Christianity, quoted approvingly in the progress of his wonder-working discourse from a

prophecy of Joel and two of the Psalms of David, together with possible, but not so unmistakable, allusions to the prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah. (Acts ii. 16.) It is noticeable that one of the Psalms is that with which Jesus ended the controversy with the Pharisees. He had evidently learned from his Master the true view of the 110th Psalm.

A short time thereafter Peter, speaking to a concourse of people, who had run together in the porch of the temple which was called "Solomon's," around himself and John and a cripple whom they had healed, declared unto them that the facts concerning the crucifixion of Jesus were "of those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer." (Acts iii. 18.) In the same address he quoted from Deuteronomy (which from his Lord he had learned to refer to as being "what Moses said") a prediction of the Messiah, and adds "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." (Acts iii. 24.) Here is surely an all-inclusive declaration—"all the prophets from Samuel, *as many as have spoken.*" The rising up of Samuel here in Peter's discourse is calculated to affect the destructive critics as the prophet's reappearance in the cave of Endor

affected the apostate King Saul, from whom "God had departed," who when Samuel spoke to him, fell "straightway all along the earth (i. e., full length) and was sore afraid, and there was no strength in him." (1 Samuel xxviii. 20.)

Stephen, the first martyr, in his defense before the men who stoned him to death, reviews with perfect confidence upon his own part, and without contradiction by his accusers, the whole Israelitish history as recorded in the Old Testament, and declares the story of the nation was one of disobedience to their inspired prophets, which he denounces as "resistance to the Holy Ghost." (Acts vii. 51.) They were unable to overcome his appeal to their own Scriptures, and being powerless to silence him "with force of argument they resorted to the argument of force," casting him out of the city and stoning him till he died. And Saul of Tarsus, a man mighty in the Scriptures, was there and "was consenting unto his death."

This Saul was subsequently converted, and became an Apostle, and one "not a whit behind the chiefest." (2 Corinthians xi. 5.) His change of sides in the mighty struggle which sprang up in Palestine about the resurrection of Jesus, a short time after the crucifixion, cost him much. He himself is authority for the statement that

it cost him "the loss of all things." But in passing from Judaism to Christianity there was one thing he never dreamed of leaving behind—the Jewish Scriptures. On the contrary he clung to them more tenaciously and tenderly than ever before. When he was a prisoner at Rome, incarcerated with no hope of ever being free again—a prisoner for the hope of Israel, bound with a chain, and still more firmly bound to Christ (Acts xxviii. 20)—his heart turned hungrily towards the precious parchments which he hurriedly left with his friend Carpus at Troas on the day of his second arrest. With these he wished to spend the dreary days and the the drearier nights of his waiting in the Roman dungeon, and so he wrote Timothy to send them. His letter reminds one of that touching letter of William Tyndale, a martyr also for the Bible, written from the damp prison of Vilvoorde. This greatest of the translators of the English Bible writes a friend, as winter approaches, requesting that his friend will beg the Commissary to send "a warmer cap," "a warmer cloak," "a woolen shirt" and "some cloth to patch his leggings," and adds: "But most of all I entreat and implore your kindness to do your best with the Commissary to be so good as to send me my Hebrew Bible, grammar, and vocabulary, that I may spend my

time in that pursuit."[6] This noble martyr, waiting for the ascension he accomplished from Antwerp, did not in the sixteenth century pore more devoutly and believingly over his Hebrew Bible, in the cold cells of Vilvoorde, than did Paul over the Old Testament Scriptures while in the first century he looked from a Roman dungeon for the coming of his Lord, bringing his confessor's crown. Writing with his manacled hand to Timothy, his dear son in the Gospel, he thus exhorts him: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy, iii. 14-17.)

Clearly the ancient Jews did not hold more reverently the Hebrew Scriptures than did the Apostles of Jesus and the Primitive Church. And if in this matter they did cling to the

[6] Quoted by Archdeacon Farrar in "The Messages of the Books," page 392.

beggarly elements of an obstinate Judaism, and did thus fall into grievous error, they could plead in extenuation of their folly the deference which their Master paid to the Old Testament. He had eaten those sour grapes and therefore their teeth were set on edge.

There remains yet one other proof that we have not mistaken the attitude of Jesus to the sacred books of the Jews—a striking and peculiar proof. Reference is intended to the testimony of some of the modern historical critics —sometimes called "the higher critics." They betray in their writings the consciousness that their theories are in conflict with the teachings of Jesus, and they adopt a clumsy, if not blasphemous, device to escape the consequent embarrassment of their position. Finding themselves in antagonism to the words of Jesus, they take an appeal from his authority, by pleading what one has called his "intellectual fallibility" as a part of that limitation of his humanity which is technically known as his *Kenosis.* The Roman soldiers refused to divide his seamless coat, but these analysts of the incarnation, to meet the exigencies of an untenable hypothesis, put asunder his divine and human natures, that his divinity may escape responsibility for his uncritical humanity, which echoes the current opinion of his superstitious age, instead of

uttering the enduring truth of the everlasting God. They devise a theory of Messianic humiliation which imposes upon Jesus a limitation of knowledge but no restraint of utterance—his nescience is deeper than his silence. It is evident that a self-emptying of this sort does not result in a God-man but ends in a false man. A *kenosis* which depresses the intellect beneath the level of capacity to know if the Hebrew Scriptures were a revelation from God, but leaves the powers of speech free to erroneously declare them to be such a revelation, is not the *Kenosis* of the Evangelists and St. Paul. It brings before us a theological centaur, painfully conceived and monstrously delivered by a distressed criticism, and not the babe of Bethlehem, born of the Virgin Mary.

And yet, such is the image upon which our rationalizing Magi bestow their treasures and pour out their frankincense. Kuenen says: "With regard to the revered Master must the right of criticism be maintained."[7] Dr. Crawford Howell Toy says: "As an individual man, He had of necessity a definite, restricted intellectual outfit and outlook, and these could be only those of his day and generation. As a teacher of spiritual truth sent from God and

[7] "Prophets and Prophecy in Israel," page 547, quoted by Bishop Ellicott in "Christus Comprobator," page 97.

full of God, He is universal; as a logician and critic, He belongs to his time."[8] Rothe declares: "The Redeemer never claimed to be an infallible or even a generally precise interpreter of the Old Testament. Indeed, he could not have made this claim; for interpretation is essentially a scientific function, and one conditioned by the existence of scientific means, which, in relation to the Old Testament, were only imperfectly at the command of Jesus, as well as of his contemporaries."[9] The same trend is visible in the chapter by Canon Gore on Inspiration in the well-known book, entitled "Lux Mundi."[10]

These neologists from analyzing the Scriptures have fallen to analyzing the Messiah of the Scriptures. Denying the supernatural prescience and divine inspiration of the Hebrew prophets, they have come at last to claim for themselves the right to vivisect the Incarnation, and to minutely determine the functions of the severed parts of the hypostatic union. They have extended the province of their own critical powers to the reduction of the area of the Master's knowledge. They invite us to join with them in worshiping a Messiah of

[8] "Quotations in the New Testament," pages 28, 29.

[9] Quoted in Ladd's "Doctrine of Sacred Scriptures," page 28.

[10] "Lux Mundi," page 301.

their own invention—a sort of Siamese Twins, the divine person of the couple being as dumb as the Sphinx, and the human member being as garrulous and misleading as the ambiguous Oracle of Delphi. They would have it that this figment of their own fabrication is the God-man of the Evangelists, and that while on the earth he knew what he was *being* about, but did not know what he was *talking* about. To dislodge Moses and the prophets from the Mount of Inspiration, they talk with less reason than did the dazed disciple when he sought to detain the great Law-giver and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration.

From all such vain conceits and empty speculations, common sense, as well as faith, turns away to the plain but profound words of Jesus in his intercessory prayer for his early disciples, and the future church, on the night before the crucifixion: "Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee, for *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me,* and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Are we at liberty to limit this claim of Jesus that he gave to his followers the words which the Father gave to him, so that it shall not cover what he said to

them concerning the Old Testament, but shall include only what he taught them on his own authority alone? Shall this limitation be placed on the instruction given to the Apostles just before the Ascension, when they were about to go forth as his "witnesses" among all nations, and when in order to fit them for their mighty task, "he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures?" Was *his* intellect dark and fettered while he enlightened and liberated *their* minds? If so, his stature is not only reduced below that of the Son of God; it falls below the height of even an inspired man. The logic of this sort of speculation at the first step makes the God-man less than an inspired man; at the second, it makes him less than a wise man—a mistaken man; and at the last, it must declare him less than a true man—an impostor. And so it must in the end reach the conclusion that the purest and brightest light that ever shone on men was darkness.

What then is left? The light of the Hebrew Scriptures has been quenched, and Jesus, the Light of the World, has gone out! The critics themselves could not endure such darkness, for there would presently be no universities to support them, no libraries for them to delve in, no manuscripts to compare, and no lis-

teners or readers to receive the results of their research. Let the belief gain general prevalence that the Hebrew Scriptures are without authority and that Jesus is a Teacher of a limited reliability, let distrust of these great sources of Truth, whence the noblest minds and the loftiest civilizations have drawn their inspiration, become wide-spread, and the number of men left who will regard the pursuit of truth as being worth the effort will be few indeed. As has been eloquently said, "Religion will not depart from this world alone. When you compose her form in death, prepare tears for other objects of love, many and dear. Art, literature, culture and religion have taken an oath to die and be buried as they have lived, locked in each other's arms."[11]

Jesus, who came to witness to the Truth, is a true witness. He was not deceived, nor did he lead his followers and mankind into error. The Old Testament Scriptures are the "Oracles of God." (Romans iii. 2.) Much advantage every way had the Hebrew nation to whom they "were committed." Far greater the advantage of the Christian commonwealth—the Church of God—who has inherited them with the added blessing of Him who having fulfilled

[11] From the Inaugural Address of President E. B. Andrews at Denison University, Ohio, Dec. 21, 1875.

them, has opened the understanding of his followers that they may behold wondrous things out of these sacred pages.

He authenticates and interprets them, giving them an authority they could never have had without Him. He is higher than the highest of the critics and truer than the truest. He is *Christus Auctor*. The earth may melt with fervent heat and the heavens pass away with a great noise, but not one jot or one tittle of the Old Testament shall pass away till all be fulfilled.

XI

WHEN GOD WAS AMONG MEN DID HE PROVIDE FOR SACRED BOOKS, ADDITIONAL TO THE OLD TESTAMENT? WHAT AUTHORITY DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT DERIVE FROM JESUS?

"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—*St. John.*

"The New Testament lies concealed in the Old, and the Old stands revealed in the New."—*St. Augustine.*

"The question as to the value to be attached to the collection contained in the Canon is, and remains a purely historical question; the church through the medium of which we received it, exists for us, not as an infallible authority, but as a venerable witness to the truth."—*Van Oosterzee.*

"The principle on which the Canon of the New Testament is determined is equally simple. Those books, and those only, which can be proved to have been written by the Apostles, or to have received their sanction are to be recognized as of divine authority."—*Dr. Charles Hodge.*

XI

When God Was Among Men Did He Provide For Sacred Books, Additional to the Old Testament? What Authority Does the New Testament Derive From Jesus?

Jesus stands historically between the sacred books of the Jews and the books additional thereto which are held sacred by the Christian church. He looks backward to the Old Testament, a canon completed before he came, composed of books of which the Jewish historian Josephus says "all Jews are instinctively led from their birth to regard as the decrees of God, and to abide by them, and if need be, gladly to die for them"—and gives it his endorsement. If other sacred books are to be added to these after the period of his appearance among men, He must look forward and make provision for them. It is not compatible with the ends of revelation, nor agreeable with that method of revelation so clearly visible in the Old Testament, that He should with his own hand make a sacred book. Such a book could not inspire worshipful faith in a free agent like man, but must inevitably result

in defeating the very object of a divine revelation, by leading not to adoration of God, but to the worship of itself. If Jesus had made a book the earth would not now be filled with Christianity, but would be overrun with bibliolatry.

On the other hand, it is incredible that such a manifestation of God as is found in the earthly history of the Incarnate One should not be followed by Scriptures written by somebody. As has been remarked with great force by the Rev. Principal John Cairns, "It would be quite anomalous to have divinely provided records of Old Testament revelation vouched for by the Saviour, while the last, and in many respects greatest, stage of revelation, remained without supply or guarantee. This is not a mere *a priori* deduction. The strongest evidence of the fact would be needed to show that for some mysterious reason, the analogy did not hold. Hence the church will never believe that documents which seem to meet this want did not mean to do so, or that the New Testament Scriptures were less carefully produced and less minutely superintended than that which our Lord treated with such unquestioning submission."[1]

If one may be permitted so to speak, the al-

[1] In "Inspiration: A Clerical Symposium," page 60.

ternative before Jesus was not: no book or the New Testament, but the real choice was between the New Testament and a boundless and baneful Apocrypha. It was impossible that his coming in the age of Tiberius should not set many writers to work, and unless a true account and a reliable exposition of his life and doctrine were provided for, nothing could be more certain than that his marvelous career would give rise to endless histories, more or less superstitious, and would eventually engender a body of fables devoid even of the virtue of being cunningly devised. Witness the apocryphal gospels of the post-apostolic age. Witness the case of Lycurgus, whose biography Plutarch thus begins: "Of Lycurgus, the lawgiver, we have nothing to relate that is certain and uncontroverted. For there are different accounts of his birth, his travels, his death and especially of the laws and form of government he established. But least of all are the times agreed upon in which this great man lived."[2] If such was the case with Lycurgus, who before Plutarch could not have lived much more than a thousand years, what would have been the results to us who live at the opening of the twentieth century, if no New Testament had been

[2] Edition, Applegate & Co., Cincinnati, 1855, page 46.

written? The inevitable result must have been destructive of what Jesus came to accomplish.

Accordingly we find Him promising to his immediate Apostles, who "companied with Him all the time He went in and out among them" (Acts i. 21), special guidance of inspiration during all the period of their unique ministry, when, as "witnesses," who should have, and who could have, no successors, they went forth to spread his doctrines and found his church. One can not imagine how they could, without such aid, accomplish the mission to which he sent them. He had said to them, after declaring that all power had been given unto him in heaven and earth, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." How could they be expected to do it unless he had added, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the ends of the world"? How could they even remember the "all things" which he had commanded unless some such mentor were provided, as is indicated in the promise: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said

unto you"? Again, he said unto them, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." How could this commandment be obeyed to any real or valuable purpose, unless in some form their words could be projected into regions and times into which in person they could never enter? For so great a task some inspired provision of supernatural aid must be forthcoming, or they must have failed.

Gaussen puts the matter forcibly when he says: "They were the immediate envoys (αποστόλοι) of the Son of God; they went to all nations; they had the assurance that their Master would be present with the testimony they were to bear to Him in the Holy Scriptures. Did they require, then, less inspiration for their going to the ends of the earth, and to make disciples of all nations, than the prophets required for going to Israel and teaching that one people, the Jews? Had they not to promulgate all the doctrines, all the ordinances, all the mysteries of the Kingdom of God? Had they not to bear 'the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven' in such sort, that whatsoever they should bind or loose on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven? . . . . Had they not to report his inimitable words? Had

they not to perform on earth the miraculous, intransmissible functions of his representatives and of his ambassadors, as if it had been Christ that spoke by them? (2 Corinthians v. 20.) Were they not called to such a glory, 'that in the great final regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?' (Matthew xix. 28.) If, then, prophetic inspiration were necessary for the former men of God, in order to show the Messiah under the shadows, was it not much more necessary for them, in order to their bringing him out into the light, and to their evidently setting him forth as crucified amongst us (Galatians iii. 1) in such manner that he that despiseth them despiseth him, and he that heareth them heareth him? (Luke x. 16.) Let one judge by all these traits what the inspiration of the New Testament behooved to have been, compared with that of the Old; and let him say whether, while the latter was wholly and entirely prophetic (inspired) that of the New could be anything less!"[3]

He continues: "But this is not all; listen further to the promises that were made to them for the performance of such a work. No human

[3] "Theopneustia," page 75.

language can express with greater force the most absolute inspiration. These promises were for the most part addressed to them on three great occasions: first, when sent out for the first time to preach the kingdom of God (Matthew x. 19, 20); next, when Jesus himself delivered public discourses on the Gospel before an immense multitude, gathered by tens of thousands around him (Luke xxi. 12); third, when he uttered his last denunciation against Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. (Matthew xiii. 2; Luke xxi. 14-16.)

"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak (πῶς ἢ τί), for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." . . . . "And when they bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought, how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." . . . . "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, speak ye; for it is not ye that speak but the Holy Ghost." . . . . "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will

give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay and resist."[4]

After thus grouping these remarkable promises of Jesus to the Apostles, this devout writer pertinently and irresistibly inquires: "We ask if it were possible in any language to express more absolutely the most entire inspiration, and to declare with more precision that the very words were then vouched by God and given to the Apostles?"[5]

To all this, however, it may be objected that these promises had exclusive reference to oral utterances and imply nothing as to the writings with which we have to do. To which we ask in reply, is it reasonable to suppose their fleeting utterances of an hour were to be guaranteed and the permanent writings required to preserve the faith for all time and which they only could supply, were to be the product of uncertain, human composition? Were the Apostles reeds of a day shaken by chance winds of the spirit and yielding a verbal foliage, which, falling and decaying, made loam to fertilize narrow areas in their own time, or were they as trees planted by the rivers of water, striking their roots into a perpetual moisture, and yield-

[4] "Theopneustia," page 76.
[5] Ibid., page 77.

ing leaves for the healing of all nations in all lands? To quote again from Dr. Gaussen, "Is it not evident enough that if the most entire inspiration were assured to them for passing exigencies, to shut the mouths of some wicked men, to conjure the perils of a day, and to subserve interests of the narrowest range; if it were promised them, notwithstanding that the very words of their answers should then be given to them by means of a calm, mighty but inexplicable operation of the Holy Ghost—is it not evident enough that the same assistance could not be refused to those same men, when like the ancient prophets they had to continue the book of God's 'Oracles'; and so to hand down to all succeeding ages the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven, and describe the glories of Jesus Christ and the scenes of Eternity?"[6]

The evidence that the Apostles believed that these promises extended to their written as well as to their spoken words is abundant and convincing, and the weight of their testimony to their own inspiration is increased by a consideration which is thus presented by the Rev. Henry Wace, A.M., in the Bampton Lectures of 1879. He says: "These men were not Pagans by birth and education, and accustomed like Greeks to think lightly of a Divine Being and

[6] "Theopneustia," pages 77, 78.

of communications with Him. They were Jews, who had the third commandment continually before their eyes, and for whom the very name of God possessed an awful and almost unutterable solemnity."[7] Is it credible that these men—John, Peter, Paul, James and Jude—Hebrews of the Hebrews—would, without authority from their Lord, have intruded themselves among the inspired writers of their nation? Would they have allowed and encouraged Mark and Luke, or any other of their immediate pupils, to have done so unless they were inspired, without monumental rebuke?

They knew that they composed an inner and exclusive circle in the New Kingdom. Witness the care, though mistaken haste, of St. Peter and the Jerusalem Church, in the choice of a successor to Judas—a blunder not chargeable to inspired men, for the Holy Ghost had not yet come upon them? Observe how the opponents of St. Paul at Corinth were ready to question the apostleship of him who was the divinely appointed successor to Judas, because he had not been one of the original Twelve. It was necessary for him to exhibit his credentials and he did it: "Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord?" (1 Corinthians ix. 1.) "Truly,"

[7] "The Foundations of Faith," page 73.

says he, "the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders and mighty deeds." Note how he meets the same questioning of his authority in the Galatian churches: "Paul an Apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead) and all the brethren which are with me unto the churches of Galatia." Fraternity with "the brethren" he acknowledges, but no participation by them in his apostleship. In the salutation to the first Corinthian Epistle, Sosthenes is with him, but he is only a "brother." Tenderly as Timothy was loved by him, and highly esteemed, he is carefully excluded from participation in the apostleship when in the second Epistle to the same church he begins "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy, our brother." But when he comes to talk of Peter, James and John, they are "Apostles" (Galatians i. 19), always and everywhere.

Moreover, if the Apostles had, without authority from Jesus, undertaken to set up a claim to a peculiar order and a divine inspiration, the churches, in which were many Jews who held inspired writings in a reverence amounting to awe, would not have allowed the claim. When the church at Berea, for ex-

ample, was organized, the converted Jews, who were its first members, did not receive the word of the new Evangelists until they "searched the Scriptures whether those things were so." (Acts xvii. 11.) For this the historian of the Acts does not censure them, but on account of it does rather eulogize them, declaring them to have been "more noble than those in Thessalonica." (Acts xvii. 11.) The incident is an index to a prevalent spirit which makes it unthinkable that the Apostles could have claimed inspiration, or the Jewish churches have allowed the claim, unless it had been well founded. But, as we shall see, the claim was both set up by the Apostles and acknowledged by the churches.

Writing to the church at Ephesus, St. Paul says: "Whereby when ye read what I *wrote* before in few words, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit." (Ephesians iii. 4, 5.) In writing to the Corinthians, he places himself and his fellow Apostles above the prophets: "And God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversi-

ties of tongues." (1 Corinthians xii. 28.) In harmony with this position, which he claimed for himself, the most elevated in the entire hierarchy of the supernaturally aided agents in the church, he inquires, "What? came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Corinthians xiv. 36, 37.) To the same purpose writes St. John: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." (1 John iv. 6.)

Now, if these writings be truly the writings of the Apostles—and as we have seen no one now denies the Pauline authorship of the Corinthian and Galatian Epistles—the Twelve were either inspired, as they claim to have been, or they perpetrated a fraud on the world, or they were the victims of an hallucination. The theory of fraud is excluded by the singular purity of their lives, their martyrdoms for the truth they uttered, their impressions upon their contemporaries, and their enduring power over the thoughts and lives of men in all subsequent times. The writings themselves forbid the idea of hallucination. There is in them a

serenity of movement, coupled with a certain sublime simplicity that no hallucinated intellect could momentarily attain to, much less permanently maintain. And these striking qualities are as manifest in their later as in their earlier compositions. Hallucinations are always meteoric, they burn more and more fiercely as they move, and are finally extinguished, being consumed by the heat which is constantly increased by their motion. But Paul, in sight of his death, wrote as calmly and coherently to Timothy as in earlier days he wrote convincingly to the Galatian churches. The mighty images of the Revelation never overmastered the spirit of the Exile of Patmos. St. Peter's letters are equally calm, clear and consecutive in thought and expression.

But if it be said there is no proof that shows these writings to have been from the pens of Apostles and their companions (a groundless statement as we have shown), and that therefore we do not know certainly that they claimed inspiration, we answer, if anonymous writers have put out forgeries under the names of the Apostles, why did these forgers put a claim of inspiration in the mouths of the men whose names they forged, unless the men thus personated were accustomed to make the claim for

themselves? When a man plays the part of another, does he play it naturally or unnaturally? Moreover, how comes it that so many anonymous geniuses appeared about this time, who combined gifts equal to the task of successfully imitating Apostles, with modesty so great that they forever concealed themselves, and with dishonesty so deep that they could perpetrate without a scruple the most astounding fraud? The hypotheses of sceptical criticism require to sustain them enough dead giants to fill with bones the ghastly valley of Ezekiel's vision. They have never, however, been able to get any wind to blow on their cretaceous creations to make even one of them rise up and tell his name. Some years ago Herr Emil Brusch rescued from their hiding-places at Deir-el-Bahari the mummies of the Pharaohs, and sailed down the Nile towards Cairo in the steamer of the Bulak Museum, with a shipload of "royal carcasses." Their names could be determined, though they had been buried since the days of Moses and the Exodus. But the critics laboriously paddle leaky barges up the stream of the apostolic history, loaded down with anonymous giants as mysterious and inconceivable as the heroes of the "Arabian Nights." Again, how could churches, in which there were so many Jewish members, trained to the

lifetime habit of holding inspired writings in highest reverence, fall such easy victims to the deception of the nameless giants? Furthermore, the genius of the race is not yet exhausted. Why can not some of the critics give us a successful imitation of Paul or Peter or John now? There is a fine opening for the manufacture of a new Epistle by Paul, if we may trust what the critics themselves tell us. They tell us an Epistle to the Laodiceans has been lost. The church of Laodicea was not far from the churches of Ephesus and Colosse, and all the material for reconstructing the record of the region and the time is in the hands of the critics. Let some one of them write a letter that can stand between the Ephesian and Colossian Epistles, which the church has attributed to St. Paul, and not raise in mankind a sense of infinite incongruity! Some one of them or all of them together—if they could only manage to agree with each other for one day—ought to be equal to the task, if anonymous writers of the first and second centuries were equal to it. "Some of them can treat Paul as a tutor would his pupil, can rearrange his thoughts, can point out to him which are the important and which the unimportant, can indicate where he wanders from his subject and where he has lost the

clue to his own meaning."[8] Surely men so learned and wise can write the kind of an Epistle which ought to have gone to the Laodiceans, if they can not recover the one which they say is lost. We do not ask them to find the lost one, because they have no skill to find lost things in the apostolic era, having lost a whole generation of anonymous geniuses belonging to that period. But they imagine well. Let them try their hands on imagining an Epistle to the Laodiceans. We do not ask a long one. We will be satisfied if they will give us one no longer than the eight short verses of the message to the Laodiceans, found in the last paragraph of the third chapter of the Revelation of St. John.

They need not risk the venture. The world knows what uninspired men can do—and the best they can do—when they attempt to make Apostles walk and talk before us. Have we not the Apocryphal Gospels? Have we not the books of the authors of *Ben Hur* and *Quo Vadis?* Let any fair man, who has a mind to do so, compare the account in the Acts, of St. Paul's experience on the way to Damascus with the appearance of Christ to St. Peter, set out in the sixty-ninth chapter of *Quo Vadis.* Sien-

[8] A reference in Wace's "Foundations of Faith," page 75, to Matthew Arnold's "St. Paul and Protestantism," pages 150-160.

kiewicz is not deficient in imagination or in power of expression; but between his novel and St. Luke's narrative there is an infinite distance. He seems to have the advantage of St. Luke in all that mere earthly art can furnish, but he is yet far below him in the strength and nobility of the impression made on the mind of the reader. He seems to want some high, unearthly quality which one meets on every page of the Acts, and if one were required to name the quality that is wanting, could he use a better word than—Inspiration?

But we are not left to arguments of this sort, effective as they may be. The church is not of yesterday. Her testimony is entitled to consideration. And let it be observed that it is her testimony and not her authority which is invoked. The New Testament canon was not fixed by councils, but it is established by evidence. Nor does it appeal to any subjective impressions as the sole ground for its acceptance. There has been a growing fashion in certain quarters within recent years to set up some such vain and fickle standard by which to test the Scriptures. One of the exponents of this view thus states the position of himself and of his comrades in arms against orthodoxy: "We determine the inspiration of the book from its internal character and the voice of the Holy

Spirit speaking in it to the believer."[9] But we respectfully inquire if the Holy Spirit said nothing to the church in the first four centuries when the received canon, so long the code of Christianity, was forming? Again, who shall decide between two believers of the present day even, as to the inspiration of a book, if they should happen to report differently as to the import of the voice of the Holy Spirit? This standard clearly does not attest the authority of the Scriptures, but makes every man a law unto himself in the matter of divine revelation. At bottom it is the same as that of the Roman Catholic Church, making its appeal to an Infallible Pope or to Infallible Councils. The only difference between these new *Illuminati* and the Romanists is in the number of the Popes provided for by each. The Romanist has one and the *Illuminati* have as many as there are men who can be found to discard the testimony of the Church in all ages as a venerable witness, and to appeal to their own confident consciousness to determine the fact of inspiration. We do not feel free to join ourselves to one Pope or to a multitude of Popes, to a single lord or to "lords many." It seems safer to follow reason and reach con-

[9] Dr. C. A. Briggs in the "*American Review*," for July, 1891.

clusions from testimony than to yield submission to impressions, and to raise fleeting emotional states to the level of "Oracles of God," or rather, to elevate them *above* the divine oracles. To the law and to the testimony we take our appeal—to the law of reason and to the testimony of history.

Before taking up the witness of the early church to the authority of the New Testament —the church which allowed as just and true the great claim of the apostolic writings to inspiration—two general observations should be made.

The first is, that these writings made such an overwhelming impression on the early churches that an amazing work of copying and circulating them was speedily accomplished. Epistles sent originally to the church at Corinth are in a marvelously brief time found in Syria, Africa, Gaul and Italy. In an age when books were made by processes painful and expensive, it is a very strange fact to find churches composed in the main of poor and illiterate peasants bringing such wide-spread results to pass as are indicated by the rapid and extensive circulation of the books of the New Testament.

In the second place, no councils were called to decide what was and what was not an apostolic writing. Such questions, if they arose at all,

seemed to have been treated as matters of fact upon which any man having the facts before him was as competent as another to pass. This is true of the early part of the second century and also of the period of Eusebius. There is no hurry and no superstition in the investigation. The churches acted not as people do who are trying to make up books, but as pious people who are trying to find and follow sacred books already made. The pronounced Hebrew tendency to hold inspired writings in the greatest reverence was evidently perpetuated in the early Christian churches. They were little disposed to "believe every spirit," but did rather "try the spirits," which came to them in the form of books which claimed to be inspired. (1 John iv. 1.) And they had means by which to try them which are not in our hands—no, not in the hands of even our most self-assured critics. We know, for example, to a certainty, that Eusebius and Athanasius had precious manuscripts before them which have not reached our time.

With these considerations in mind, let us consider briefly some of the testimony of them who have been called "the Fathers," and their immediate successors. In a former chapter (Chapter VIII.) we have examined some of the statements which they make. We may now,

therefore, make a more brief and hurried review of a part of what they affirm.

A recent and careful writer of well-known competency condenses some of this great mass of testimony thus: "We have some remains of what were called the Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Ignatius of Antioch, between the years 90 and 130, by which we learn that the writings of the Apostles had not only extended beyond the narrow circle of their origin, but were already exercising a marked influence on the teaching. In them we find mention of certain Epistles of Paul, and also of the evangelic history and of certain words of Jesus, the two being commonly called the Gospel and the Epistle. In this appeal to written records is the fruitful germ of the deference subsequently paid to the New Testament writers. It is not contended that these Apostolic Fathers had a complete canon in their hands. That may or may not have been the case. The recognition of the canon was doubtless as gradual as its formation had been. All that we are concerned to establish is that these Fathers had New Testament authorities to which they referred as genuine and decisive. The Old Testament was already in their possession, and they had long been accustomed to use it in public and in private; but

now they had something more, to wit: The Christian truth contained in Christ's life, whether conveyed orally or in writing, and the instructions of the Apostles, given either in Epistles, or through the traditional arrangements they had made in the churches."[10]

To exhibit this testimony more in detail, we add: that Clement of Rome, who was a contemporary of the Apostles, appeals to the Gospels, the Epistle to Ephesians, the first Epistle to Corinthians, the Epistle of St. James, the first Epistle of Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews; that Ignatius, who was martyred probably not later than A. D. 107, quotes from the Ephesians, the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, the first Epistle of St. Peter, the Epistle of St. James, and the Pauline Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Thessalonians, and Timothy; that Polycarp, who knew St. John, and became a Christian before "the beloved disciple died," cites the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts, Seven Epistles of St. Paul, the first Epistle of St. Peter and the first of St. John.

It will be observed that the number of the books of the New Testament in the hands of men, thus widely separated and at a period so early, is a wonderful testimony to the reverence

[10] Talbot W. Chambers, in an article on the Canon, contained in "The Inspired Word," pages 301, 302.

paid to the apostolic writings from the first. What but the acknowledgment of their inspiration can explain this vast energy of copying and distribution? That these venerable witnesses do not give us proofs that they had all the books is not strange, nor does it materially affect this argument. The wonder is that they had so many. It is more than probable that many of their own writings have perished and that if we had all they wrote we should find attestations of all the books of the New Testament. Certain it is that we have very remarkable testimony from their immediate successors in the Second Century.

The testimony of some of these "Apologists" of the second century is thus summarized by the learned and lamented Dr. Summers: "Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, who lived about the time of the death of John the Evangelist, cites the Gospels of Matthew and Mark by name, and alludes to other books of the New Testament. Justin Martyr (A. D. 140) alludes frequently to the Gospels as 'Memoirs of the Apostles and their Companions,' and quotes from the Acts and many of the Epistles, and says, 'the Revelation of Christ was written by John, one of the Apostles.'

"Tatian (A. D. 172) composed a *Diatessaron* or Harmony of the Four Gospels. Melito (A.

D. 170) wrote a commentary on the Revelation of St. John.

"Irenaeus (A. D. 170) bears testimony to every book of the New Testament, except the Epistle of Philemon, 3 John and Jude. He speaks of the 'Code of the New Testament as of the Old,' and calls them both 'the Oracles and writings dictated by His Word and Spirit.'

"Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 200) states the order in which the Four Gospels were written, and quotes all the books of the New Testament by name, and so amply, says Horne, that his citations would fill a considerable volume. He traveled in quest of information, accurately examined the subject, and thus gave great weight to his testimony."[11]

To these may be added the testimony of Origen, who lived A. D. 185-253, one of the most voluminous writers of his own or of any other age. In his writings he quotes from every book in the New Testament, so that it has been said if the Bible were destroyed, the books of the New Testament might be almost entirely restored from the quotations he has made from them. He gives a catalogue of the books, as we receive them.

We have a very ancient "fragment" (A. D.

[11] "Systematic Theology," edited by John J. Tigert, D.D., L.L.D., page 425.

170) known as the "Canon of Muratori," found in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. It begins with Luke, but calling him "the third," plainly shows that the earlier portion, which has been torn off, contained Matthew and Mark, and includes all the books as we now have them, except the Epistles of Peter, the first Epistle of John, the Epistle of James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. The explanation of the omission of the books named is not easy, but since it contains in a notice of John's Gospel a quotation from John's first Epistle, the omission is no proof that the author rejected the books he omits. The explanation is probably found in the mutilation of the text, which seems to be made up of detached pieces.

Eusebius (A. D. 315), who must undoubtedly have had access to manuscript treasures beyond all that we can reach, since he was attached to the Court of the Emperor Constantine, in the third book of his Ecclesiastical History, informs us that in his day the books claiming to be regarded as Scriptures were divided into three classes: the universally accepted; those that were received but not unanimously; and those which were utterly rejected. He names the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third Epistles of

St. John and the Revelation, as not unanimously accepted. The other books, as we have them, he names as universally received. All other books mentioned by him he classes as universally rejected. Here is evidently an honest historian, with excellent opportunity for research, reaching a conclusion which he candidly expresses. The books which he names as not unanimously received, as we have seen, are confirmed by other credible witnesses before his time. Of witnesses contemporary with Eusebius and of a little later period may be mentioned: Athanasius (A. D. 315), Epiphanius (A. D. 370), Rufinus (A. D. 390), Augustine (A. D. 394), and the forty bishops who composed the Council of Carthage (A. D. 397), all of whom give the canon as we have it. The catalogues of Cyril of Jerusalem (A. D. 340), of the Council of Laodicea (A. D. 364), and of Gregory of Nazianzen (A. D. 375), are the same as our canon, except the Revelation is omitted. Philarte, Bishop of Brescia (A. D. 380), omits Hebrews and Revelation from his list, though in other parts of his works he acknowledges them, so that an omission is not always conclusive evidence that a book was rejected.

All these testimonies show how carefully all the books of the canon were scanned in the

post-apostolic age, and how marvelously they were circulated in the apostolic age. If we had a tithe of such proof to attest a newly discovered work of Tacitus or Herodotus, such a book would be instantly and without controversy received by the critics. No such interest in these books, or care for them, could have arisen if the early church from the days of the Apostles forward had not believed them inspired. And it is a remarkable fact that to this day universal Christianity, whether found in the Protestant, Roman or Greek churches, acknowledge the same New Testament Scriptures. About other things they differ, but when the standard of truth is reached, the controversy is at an end. Is there any other question open to discussion among men about which such unanimity has ever been reached?

Moreover, these books set themselves apart by unmistakable qualities all their own. So marked is this quality ingrained in them that the debate over the canon, during the period of its formation, never took the direction of bringing in any other books not now accepted, but was always of doubt as to whether a few of those we have ought to have been admitted. This disposition did not bespeak a superstitious spirit hunting marvelous writings, but did rather exhibit a spirit of

scrupulous care, sifting evidence that no trace of error should creep into the sacred books of the church.

In addition to this array of historic proof, we may appeal to internal evidence in corroboration of it. There is a truth in the much-abused and much-perverted dictum of Coleridge that "whatever finds me bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from the Holy Ghost." There is a divine tone in the books of the New Testament. To their inspired tone Neander testifies: "A phenomenon singular in its kind, is the striking difference between the writings of the Apostles and those of the Apostolic Fathers who were so nearly their contemporaries. In other cases transitions are wont to be gradual, but in this instance we observe sudden change. There is not gentle gradation here, but all at once an abrupt transition from one style of language to another, a phenomenon which should lead us to acknowledge the fact of a special agency of the Divine Spirit in the souls of the Apostles, and of a new creative element in the first period."[12] No writer of all earth's celebrities has ever been able to catch and repeat this tone. Surely it is none other than that of the Good Shepherd, whose voice His sheep never mistake.

[12] "Church History," Vol. I., 656.

If anywhere the Words of Jesus and the Mind of the Spirit have been preserved, it is in the New Testament. If they have been lost, then we have the strangest series of events in history. Buckle says, "No great truth which has once been found has ever afterwards been lost."[13] But if the New Testament be not the Word of God, the God-man, who came to bear witness to the truth, has passed away and left no certain truth concerning himself behind him; he has led Apostles into a blasphemous deception which continues even into our times; around this profane deception has sprung up the church, the most unaccountable institution among men, if its sacred books be fables; in the propagation of the delusive writings has sprung up the highest civilizations in the earth, and within their grasp seems to be the conquest of the world. In short, the greatest truth that ever appeared among men has hopelessly perished since Jesus went away, and the greatest delusion has taken its place—and behold the monstrous delusion is the hope of men, the only chance they have for a Revelation from God.

[13] "History of Civilization," I., 215.

XII

HAVE THE SACRED BOOKS AUTHENTICATED BY GOD WHEN HE WAS AMONG MEN REACHED US IN A SUBSTANTIALLY UNCORRUPTED STATE?

"The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."—*St. Peter.*

"If, on the one hand, we are forced to confess that the labors of scholars present us only with successive approximations to a result the absolute attainment of which is impossible, on the other hand we may congratulate ourselves on the fact, on which all competent scholars are agreed, that in our incapacity to construct an absolutely perfect text our loss is practically infinitesimal, for that no important principle of the Christian religion is compromised or perilled thereby."—*J. J. Lias.*

"I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatever."—*Sir Isaac Newton.*

"All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truth contained in the sacred Scriptures."—*Sir John Herschel.*

XII

Have the Sacred Books Authenticated by God When He Was Among Men Reached Us in a Substantially Uncorrupted State?

It has been imagined by some that unless an unbroken line of miracles has attended the Scriptures to preserve them against corruption we can not be sure we have the books as they were originally inspired, however we may be assured of their divine quality when first written. For example, some years ago, the Rev. H. R. Haweis, of London, flippantly said, in an address on Inspiration before the students of Harvard University, that the doctrine of inspiration involved by necessity the notion of inspired copyists, inspired printers and even of inspired printers' devils.[1] This shallow and irreverent utterance expresses a superficial theory which is at once the superstition of some pious but thoughtless people and the boast of some sceptical minds equally thoughtless. And curiously enough the superstition of the pious has led them much more nearly to the truth than the scepticism of the unbelievers.

[1] "The Inspired Word," page 14.

As a matter of fact, without miraculous interference, or even the intrusion of ecclesiastical authority, the Scriptures have reached us in a form more convincing than if they bore the autographs of the inspired writers. If we had such autographs, who would attest them to us, and who would attest that attestation, and how would an unbroken line of such attestations down the ages be secured without a continuous miracle? But as we have seen (Chapter II.) a method of endless miracles would not only subvert God's established order of nature, which is inconsistent with the divine plan, but it would also make revelation impossible by destroying the only means by which a revelation can be accredited. Both the God of Nature and the God of Revelation use the portentous sparingly. Hence, "No miracle was wrought in fixing the canon of Scripture or preserving the letter of the text. It would have been distinctly at variance with the recognized way of God to interfere after this sort with responsible human agency."[2]

But behold the miracle of miracles! God has, without a miracle, brought to pass what no miracle, nor series of miracles, could have ac-

[2] "The Witnesses to Christ," Bishop Alpheus W. Wilson, page 238.

complished so well. We have Scriptures as much better than autograph copies as an attested and recorded deed is better than one unattested and unrecorded, however genuine. The God who left not himself without witness in any of the nations (Acts xiv. 17) has set round about the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures a great cloud of witnesses that His Word might run and be glorified among all nations and in all times.

Four majestic figures guard the Old Testament Scriptures—the Jewish, Greek, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Churches. No book can creep into the canon, nor passage, to corrupt, without some or all of these witnesses instantly detecting and exposing the fraud. Nor is the force of this statement weakened, but rather strengthened, by the fact that the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, convened December, 1545, inserted what are known as the Apocryphal books in their canon, and that in 1692 the Eastern Church tardily followed the vicious example. The date of the transaction discredits it—in both instances. The motion to reconsider the canon came too late, by over a thousand years, and ought not to have been entertained. The motive of the act being to affect and hinder the Lutheran Reformers sufficiently accounts for it. The venerable wit-

ness of Judaism confutes this apostate testimony, tainted with the suspicion of being made to order. The faithful witness of a unanimous Protestantism withstands it. And highest of all stands up against it the testimony of Jesus, who never, so far as the Gospels show, quoted one line from the Apochrypha—not even an "echo," to use the apt word of Bishop Ellicott. To the integrity of all the other books of the canon without the Apocrypha, all the witnesses testify in solemn and sublime agreement, and with them join the celebrated Philo, a contemporary of the Apostles, and Josephus, another of their contemporaries, if possible still more celebrated.

As to the purity of the text, we may safely trust the testimony of wise and scholarly men, who, with ample means at hand for the investigation of such matters, have reached and published to the world their conclusions upon the subject. Speaking of the remarkable safeguards which have been thrown around the Old Testament Scriptures, Dr. William Henry Green, a scholar whose words are weighty among the learned, says: "It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted."[3] And this conclusion

[3] "General Introduction to the Old Testament," page 181.

of Princeton's revered "Professor of Oriental and Old Testament Literature," will not be denied by any competent scholar of any school of thought. Moreover, it is confirmed by the fact which the critical can not obscure nor the unlearned misunderstand, that Jews and Christians, of all sects and creeds, while differing about almost all other questions and carrying on, time out of mind, endless controversies, all are agreed when this point is reached. The Old Testament Scriptures, the stream upon which the truth of God is borne to men, like the great Canal of Suez, is shielded by a compact between all the believers in Revelation the wide world over—a compact little short of a miracle. It is covered by "the truce of God."

But what of the inaccuracies and blemishes which a certain school of critics claim to have discovered in the old Testament Scriptures? Shall we bind blemished books *en bloc* and make Jesus the authority for their perfection? By no means! Let us stand firmly upon the noble words of Coleridge, that "He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all."[4] But while loving the

[4]Mor. and Rel. Aphor., XXV., Works, New York, Edition 1853, Vol. I., page 173.

truth supremely, let us not too quickly fall in with the merely plausible, and imagine it to be the truth, because certain called "higher critics" say so. There is a centrifugal disposition of mind which carries some men beyond the orbit of Truth, where they are more ready to believe in the Infallibility of the Critics than in the Inspiration of the Scriptures. Yet nothing can be more certain than that orthodox Christianity has been able for nearly twenty centuries to maintain every essential position it has assumed in defense of the truth once delivered to the saints, while Criticism has been forced to evacuate "Doubting Castles" without number. It will serve the purposes of both argument and illustration to revert to some instances in point. It has not been very long since the critics averred that St. Luke was in error when in his account of St. Paul's visit to Cyprus he called the governor of the island a "pro-consul," whereas the critics said Sergius Paulus should have been called a "pro-prætor," because Strabo and Dion Cassius Cocceianus named Cyprus as an imperial district, and its governor should have been called, therefore, a "pro-prætor." But later it was discovered that the same historian Dion Cassius Cocceianus had recorded, that while Augustus did hold Cyprus as an imperial

province for a time, he eventually exchanged it for another district, and thus it became a senatorial province, and "pro-consul" was the proper title for its governor. Still later, coins of the time were found, and these also called the rulers of Cyprus "pro-consuls." Still further, General Cesnola, in his excavations on Cyprus, came upon a coin bearing the inscription, "in the pro-consulship of Paulus." And so Luke was right after all, and it is evident that his narrative is no "pious make-up," or the writer would have fallen into the error of using the word, "pro-prætor," which had generally been the proper title for the governor of Cyprus, but was not the proper title when Paul was there. In this connection it is pertinent to inquire why the critics gave judgment against Luke and in favor of Strabo and Dion Cassius Cocceianus in the first instance? Have the critics a bias against ancient writings if they happen to be Christian documents, and a bias for them if they happen to be Pagan documents? Have Pagan histories for centuries had the care of the church around them to keep them pure?

Again, as lately as fifteen or twenty years ago, the critics sneered at "the inaccuracies of the Bible in regard to the Hittites." But a broad light has recently been thrown on the

history of the Hittites by the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Hittite inscriptions, and the Bible history has been confirmed and the critics confounded. The book of Daniel was once corrected by the critics in the matter of the kings of Babylon. But archæology has with obstinate truthfulness sided with Daniel and against the critics. They are working on Daniel yet, being much disturbed by the Greek names of certain musical instruments to which he alludes, and drawing immense inferences from the small premises with which they start. But Mr. Flinders Petrie's excavations in Egypt lead him to think that, long before the Exile, Greeks and Jews must have come into contact at Tahpanhes, and that "the Greek names of musical instruments may have been heard in the courts of Solomon's Temple."[5] And so Daniel may again be found correct, to the confusion of the critics. At any rate, if a bit of raillery be permissible, we may say, orthodoxy need not take fright at the sound of these musical instruments and fly away from the God of Daniel and his friends, to worship the image which the critics have set up. The critics have no furnace hotter than a modern gas stove into which, in imitation of Nebuchadnezzar, they

[5] "Ten Years Digging in Egypt," page 54, quoted by J. J. Lias in "Principles of Biblical Criticism."

may cast our faith. The lions with which they would terrify the unlearned are no more than overgrown mousers, fed from the table of Christianity, and grown a trifle defiant from being over-baited on mice caught among the Christian archives. They will do no harm to the Christian household, but will doubtless in the end serve some good use if left alone, except when they get into mischief.

Commenting upon the results of Mr. Petrie's excavations, a judicious writer has recently said, "So many of the impossibilities of the critics have turned out to be the facts of history, that it were well to pause before admitting the force of any argument built on what is after all the basis of our (often very profound) ignorance of the conditions of life in early times."[6] To the same purpose, and far more strongly, speaks Prof. Sayce: "Whenever the Biblical history comes in contact with that of its powerful neighbors, and thus can be tested by contemporaneous monuments of Egypt and Assyria-Babylonia, it is confirmed even in the smallest details."[7]

But it may be objected that some discoveries may yet be made showing errors in the Old

[6] "Principles of Biblical Criticisms," by Prof. J. J. Lias, page 253.

[7] Quoted by Canon Talbot in "Our Bible," page 18.

Testament! What then? The church will do what her Christianity enjoins upon her—admit the truth. But we may be sure, in the light of past discoveries and in view of present tendencies, that the church will not in deference to truth be called upon to surrender any smallest shred of the body of divinely inspired teaching given to her from heaven for the redemption of earth. Minor modifications of interpretation she will make as facts well ascertained may require. It may be possible that the Old Testament, which Jesus authenticated, may have differed in some slight particulars from that which we have. But the difference is infinitesimal compared with the whole body of unchanged and unchangeable truth which we have inherited from the centuries past.

Let us now inquire touching the preservation of the New Testament. We have seen how rapidly the manuscripts of the books of the New Testament were copied and circulated in the first centuries of the Christian era. We have seen how copiously the authors of the patristic writings quoted from them. Translations were also made of them, the most notable being those known as the "Vetus Latina" and "The Peshito," neither of which can be later than the third century, and most probably belong to the second century. The "Vetus

Latina" was in use among the churches of North Africa, and the "Peshito" was that used by the Syriac churches. The number of original Greek manuscripts which have been discovered is 1,583—127 (uncials) dating from the fourth to the tenth centuries, and 1,456 (cursives) dating from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries. There are, besides the "Vetus Latina" and the "Peshito," many other ancient versions, known to New Testament critics. That such a vast body of ancient manuscripts and other authorities, preserving the New Testament text, have reached our times is wonderful. There is no extant manuscript of the Greek histories of Herodotus earlier than the ninth century. The manuscripts of Plato's works do not go further back than the same date. Of the works of both Herodotus and Plato, there are less than thirty manuscript copies in existence. Scholars lament the irretrievable loss of much of Livy's writings. Much, also, that Tacitus wrote has been lost. It has so befallen, also, the works of Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles. The immense remains of the New Testament writers, compared with what is left of the writers of the classics, will appear the more remarkable when the persecutions of Decius and Diocletian are recalled—persecutions which were particularly

designed to destroy Christianity by destroying its Scriptures. The writings of Greece and Rome have perished in no such way. They were loved less and hated less because no one thought them the Word of God. But the early Christians held the books of the New Testament dear enough to die for them. The New Testament books were to the early church what the Old Testament Scriptures were to the Jews, of whom Josephus says: "It is with all the Jews as it were an inborn conviction from their very earliest infancy to call their Scriptures God's teachings, to abide in them, *and if necessary to die joyfully in maintaining them.*"[8] From similar heroism has come to us our rich inheritance already found in the New Testament manuscripts. And it is not improbable that there are many valuable manuscripts yet to be discovered. One of the greatest known manuscripts, the Codex Sinaiticus, was not secured by Professor Tischendorff and brought to the Imperial Library, at Saint Petersburg, until 1859. Not until 1868 did Pius IX. allow the Codex Vaticanus to be published to the world. And the Codex Alexandrinus was sent to Charles I. by Cyril, the Patriarch of Constantinople, no longer ago than 1628. In this connection it should be said that it is a remarkable fact that

[8] "Contra Apion," Lib. I., page 1837.

each division of the Christian church holds one of these great and most valuable manuscripts. Protestant England holds the Codex Alexandrinus in the British Museum, the Vatican Library at Rome holds the Codex Vaticanus, and the Greek Church holds the Codex Sinaiticus in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. The Book can never be lost or corrupted any more.

It is a remarkable fact, and germane to the discussion we have in hand, that without these great manuscripts the learned Erasmus constructed, from such authorities as were in his reach, a text which is so nearly perfect that little revision has been required to conform it to the authorities subsequently discovered. Remarking upon this striking fact, the learned Dr. William Milligan, of Aberdeen, says: "Erasmus and his followers for a century had but a few modern manuscripts which they could consult in preparing their editions of the New Testament. They were such as happened to be within their reach; and these were of a character on which no great reliance could be placed. To show how meager were the resources of Erasmus, it may be mentioned that he had only a single manuscript of the Apocalypse, and that even the one he possessed was not complete. A part of the New Testament would thus have been al-

together wanting in his first edition had he not ventured to supply it by translation from the Latin. He took the Vulgate and conjecturally translated it into Greek. It thus happens that in the ordinary editions of the Greek New Testament there are words still existing which, so far from resting on any manuscript authority, or having any claim to be regarded as inspired, were plainly and confessedly inserted in the text from mere conjecture. Yet, notwithstanding this, the common Greek New Testament excites our deepest wonder and admiration. We can not but regard it as a kind of Providential miracle. Although so much has been done since it was formed to throw light upon the true text of Scripture, that which was at first adopted remains for all practical purposes totally unaffected. God has never interfered with human liberty, yet it is impossible to look back upon the history of the Bible, and especially on the point now under consideration, without being struck with the manner in which he has continually watched over His own Holy Word. We may truly and thankfully say that he led Erasmus and his followers "in a way which they knew not," so as to secure a substantial accuracy in those transcripts of the New Testament which they presented to the world."[9]

[9] "The Words of the New Testament," by Milligan and Roberts, pages 73, 74.

But if Erasmus could so accurately determine the true text then, how much more certainly may it be fixed by scholars of the present day, when the three Codices at London, Rome and St. Petersburg, and other noble witnesses, wholly unknown to Erasmus, stand up to point the way of devout investigators to the "truth as it is in Jesus." We may confidently rest in the substantial correctness of the New Testament. As the learned Tischendorff strikingly remarks, "Providence has ordered it so that the New Testament can appeal to a far larger number of all kinds of original sources than the whole of the rest of ancient literature."

Verily, it has come to pass, as Jesus said it should be, when he declared that though the heavens and earth would pass away, neither the Old Testament nor His Words would pass away. The words of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and the Apostles, are in our hands. Here, as we have them before us and read them, we may think the thoughts of God after Him, and may find the way of eternal Life and Truth without danger of Error. Here is light, clear and certain.

The Word of God has withstood the madness of Antiochus, the fury of Diocletian, the hatred of Kings, and the rage of ecclesiastics. It will abide forever. The thousands

and hundreds of thousands of the "various readings," of which the critics talk so much, in nowise affect its purity. The various readings point to the multitude of copies made of the New Testament in the first century, and they will help to perfect the purity of the text used in the last century of the world's history, when the New Testament will still be mankind's great Teacher. They were the dust raised by the chariot wheels of Truth as it passed down the first centuries, and, by the alchemy of Providence, instead of dimming the sacred page, they have turned to gold-leaf in our hands with which to illumine it. As the erudite Bentley has vigorously declared: "Make your thirty thousand as many more, if numbers of copies can ever reach that sum; all the better to a knowing and serious reader, who is thereby more richly furnished to select what he sees genuine. But even put them in the hands of a knave or a fool, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter, nor so disguise the truth of Christianity but that every feature of it shall still be the same."[10]

The future holds no slightest danger to the Scriptures from discoveries in any possible direction. We have seen what the most careful research can do in the matter of revising the

[10]The "various readings" were reckoned 30,000 then,

Book in the recently completed Revised Version. "The most diligent, long-continued search for errors, omissions and interpolations has brought to light nothing that affects the great facts of the Gospel or the doctrines that have formed the substance of the church's faith and teaching from the beginning. The hate and persecutions, the clamors and controversies of the ages have failed to do serious damage to even the letter of the sacred text."[11]

The future is all on the side of the Book. This is an age of exploration and discovery. Egypt and Assyria are giving up their dead. Babylon and Nineveh are waking from their long sleep to testify. Who shall say what treasures are hidden away in Constantinople and Rome? What manuscripts may not yet be unearthed? We may be sure this divine light will not grow dim, but on the contrary shall be as the path of the just, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Wherefore the Christian church will encourage research, will welcome reverent criticism, will prove all things, will hold fast that which is good, and will walk in the light.

Her loyal sons, not her enemies, are exploring the East. The past they feel is with the Book,

[11] "Witnesses to Christ," by Bishop Alpheus W. Wilson, page 239.

and they seek to unearth the hidden records of antiquity for its confirmation and exposition. The present is full of interest and the future is full of hope. The living Christ goes before His church.

So long His truth hath blessed her, sure it still
Will lead her on
O'er moor and fen and crag and torrent till
The night is gone.
And with the morn His radiant face will smile,
Who taught her long ago and left awhile.

XIII

IS THE IMPRINT OF GOD UPON THE BOOK AUTHENTICATED BY JESUS? THE INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—*St. Paul to Timothy.*

"The Scriptures have God for their author; eternity for their object; and truth without any mixture of error for their subject-matter."—*John Locke.*

"You can not look at the Cathedral of Milan, whose first stone was laid in 1386, without instinctively knowing that it must have been the product of one mind, however many workmen may have helped to rear its marble walls and pinnacles. Its unity of design can not be the result of accident. No, the workmen were not the architect. Every stone was shaped and polished to fit its place in the plan. And so the Bible: that cathedral of the ages! Whoever the workmen were, the architect was God."—*A. T. Pierson.*

XIII

Is the Imprint of God Upon the Book Authenticated by Jesus? The Internal Evidences of the Divine Origin of the Bible.

If on the surface of the Universe we can discover the footprints of God we ought surely to find his fingerprints upon a book purporting to come from Him. And such is the case. On the Bible is the impress of a divine hand. It contains internal evidences of its superhuman origin.

A mere man can not so successfully mimic the divine voice and affect the divine manner as to play the role of a God before the world, and escape detection. Hence all man-made religions bear unmistakable marks of their human authors. Their speech "betrayeth" them. They manifest on sight that they are "from beneath" the heavens. The imperfections and the impatience of man mar them.

1. A universal fault with them is that they are full grown at birth, and thunder in such whimsical and grotesque portents as their authors vainly imagine become a revelation from God. This fact necessarily arises because they are the products of one man's brain, or at best the

fabrication of a small circle of men. Mohammedanism sprang from Mahomet full orbed. Confucianism thus sprang from Confucius. But the Bible is composed of sixty-six books written by about thirty different men residing in Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Greece, Assyria and Italy, and distributed over fifteen centuries. And yet thus widely separated from each other in time and in space they produced a book of such unity and symmetry that it appears to be the work of one overshadowing Mind, and to have but a single Author. In what literature, ancient or modern, can such unity of form and sameness of purpose be found throughout the writings of thirty different men? Can sixty-six books be picked out of English or German or Latin or Greek literature, and bound together in one, and a book be thus constructed that will make such a single and indivisible impression as the Bible makes on the reader?

2. The unity of this Book grows out of the fact that all its parts gather around a Person. Up to a certain point all the writers look forward to him, and after that the rest look backward to a peculiar era of history, and then they turn and look forward to the furthest point of the future from which they seem to see Him returning to them again. They who profess to have met him in the flesh and to report his say-

ings treat him as no pupils ever treated a Master. None of them envy him and none of them ever try to improve on his teachings. These things are not after the manner of man-made systems.

3. When men undertake to manufacture religions their efforts are bounded by the horizon of earth. They can reflect only on the things which they observe around them, and the mental states which they feel within them. Hence, the systems which they manufacture of necessity bear the marks of the moulds in which they are shaped. The imprint of nature is upon them all. Nature is their problem and their master. But nature has various moods and an uninspired man, observing its smile to-day and its frown to-morrow, not unnaturally infers two gods, and with successive scenes passing before him he multiplies his deities to account for the variety of forces he sees playing about him. Hence, the dualism of Zoroaster and the polytheisms of most of the heathen nations. Or if he manages to escape the error of many gods, from the confusing contradictions around him he reaches the conclusion that there is no god, and becomes an atheist, or he decides that God is outside His creation and can not get into it, after the manner of the ancient Gnostics or the Modern Deists;

or he identifies God with everything, both good and evil, as do the Pantheists, who compound a sort of deific varnish out of the conception of omnipresence, and overlay the face of the universe with it. But the voice of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is the cry of Israel, "The Lord our God is one Lord." Before its light atheism, dualism, polytheism, deism and pantheism fly as mists before the rising sun. The voice of the Book is not the voice of one who interprets nature but it is an unearthly voice speaking to men from the upper world.

4. For the same reason the Bible commits itself to no system of science, true or false. Moses, brought up doubtless to accept the hypothesis of the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy, never affirms it in his writings. Nor does he set forth by inspiration the Copernican system. If he had accepted the first, his books could not hold their place now. If he had adopted the second, his books would not have been believed in his own time. In miraculous silence he says nothing on the subject, and so there was faith in Israel wandering in the wilderness, and modern Christianity has had its Galileos, Keplers and Newtons. "Certainly it is astonishing that a narrative should be so constructed that without the slightest contortion it should be equally suitable to a time of ignorance and a time of

knowledge; should keep its place during thousands of years of astronomical error, and defy the assaults of its enemies during hundreds of years of astronomical truth; and should in an age of darkness on every subject of science lay the foundations of a universal religion which endures the scrutiny of an age of unexampled light."[1] Science will never render the Bible obsolete, whatever the discoveries of the future may be, for it is not an exposition of the natural but a revelation of the supernatural.

5. Moreover, all its religious truths and ethical principles are final. They fill the measure of possible thought within the limits of that which is true.

It shows God as a Father, and concerning God nothing can be conceived higher and nobler than Fatherhood. Herein it surpasses the Pantheistic doctrines of the religions of India, and the paralyzing hypotheses of modern Materialists.

It teaches the brotherhood of man—a generous, tender truth, than which there can be nothing wider. Herein it shows superiority to all the ethnic creeds of earth.

It sets forth an ethical system so perfect that since its completion and publication not a new

[1] "Reasons for Faith in the Nineteenth Century," by John McDowell Leavitt, D.D., page 43.

virtue has been conceived nor a new vice detected. Humility, poverty of spirit, forgiveness, forbearance, philanthropy, the love of enemies, self-denial and purity of heart, are excellencies revealed by it, and for which it had to clear standing room in the world, and which it has with difficulty maintained among men. In all the babbling tongues of earth there was no such word as philanthropy when Jesus taught, and "cross-bearing," the loftiest self-sacrifice, draws its name from the instrument of his execution.

It has not only revealed a perfect code of duty but it imparts an inspiration which enables men to practice the duties it enjoins. It is not a system of mere morals as Confucianism and the systems of the Stoics. It enjoins and imparts holiness of life, avoiding with the balance and poise of a life-force both laxness of principle on the one hand and asceticism of conduct on the other. In the corruptest age of the world its followers shone as lights in a benighted land, so luminously that the sceptical historian Gibbon could not overlook their "pure and austere morality."

Its revelation of human destiny is as transcendent as its proclamation of human duty is final. As there is nothing higher than its doctrine of divine fatherhood, nothing wider than its revelation of human brotherhood, nothing

purer and deeper than its requirements of personal holiness, so also its doctrine of the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting after death, more than meets all the desires implied by man's brightest hopes. Wherefore since all its characteristic principles are final truths, no more by philosophy than by science can the world outgrow it.

6. Furthermore, it is very remarkable that all these sublime truths should be found all together in one Book, and so combined as to exclude the idea that it is a mere eclecticism. It is not so with the Koran. It is not so with the philosophies of Greece and Rome. It is not so with the sacred books of India. This pure white light is from the Sun of Righteousness.

7. And all these truths are set forth not as the conclusions of laborious and painful processes of logical reasoning. They are uttered confidently. There is in the Book no such wavering and doubtful words as appear with Socrates and Plato longing for some "Word of God," to guide them in the right way. Like its divine Master it speaks "as one having authority and not as the Scribes" of Judaism or Paganism, ancient or modern. Throughout the Bible there is the assured confidence of universal empire over the minds of men.

8. Closely akin to this quality of confident

truthfulness it exhibits a style perfectly simple. In it there is nothing stilted or strained. Its writers seem never to think of rhetorical effects. Their powers of speech appear often to be burdened with the truths they present, as if human language were not able to bear the weight placed upon it, and would break beneath the strain. But there is never a trace of an effort to support feebleness of thought by excessive vigor of speech. The face of the Scriptures is tranquil as the face of nature, reflecting in serene depths the supernatural heights above.

9. Withal, throughout the Book there is a pervasive voice charged with a divine tone. A tone is a thing too subtle for analysis, yet the dullest ear must catch the qualities of tender majesty, serious joyousness, and sacred hopefulness, which sound through this superhuman Book. Its voice is that of a strong, noble, and tender Father walking in the haunts of wayward children, calling them home.

10. It brings to pass also, through its power of renovating personal character, the purification of social systems and national life. The nations which are composed of individuals who most sincerely follow its teachings are the dominant nations of the world, without regard to their place or to the numbers of people who compose them. Heathen nations, utterly or

nearly destitute of the Bible, are great obese organizations, stumbling to decay and death. Nations who are but partially penetrated by it exhibit conditions of weakness and strength exactly commensurate with the popular ignorance or knowledge of the Bible among them. Thomas Carlyle, in discussing the French Revolution, put this truth powerfully when he said: "The period of the Reformation was a Judgment Day for Europe, when all the nations were presented with an open Bible and all the emancipation of heart and intellect which an open Bible involves. England, North Germany and other powers accepted the boon, and they have been steadily growing in national greatness ever since. France rejected it; and in its place has had the gospel of Voltaire with all the anarchy, misery and bloodshed of those ceaseless revolutions of which that gospel is the parent." The Roman Catholic nations, Italy, Spain, Austria, and Portugal, who also rejected the open Bible, retaining Romanism though refusing the doctrines of Voltaire, have fallen far behind the Northern Nations in the march of progress. On the Western Hemisphere the Roman Catholic countries, of Mexico, Central America, the West Indies and South America, know nothing of the prosperity and power of Canada and the United States, where the Bible is in every home.

All these striking imprints of the divine hand are thus summarized by Theodore Parker: "View it in what light we may, the Bible is a very surprising phenomenon. This collection of books has taken such a hold on the world as has no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book of a nation alike despised in ancient and modern times. In all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up, week by week. The sun never sets on its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar and it colors the talk of the street. . . . It blesses us when we are born; gives names to half Christendom; rejoices with us; has sympathy for our mournings; tempers our grief to finer issues. . . . Some thousand famous writers come up in this century to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is never loosed nor its golden bowl broken, as Time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by. Has the human race gone mad? . . . It is only a heart that can speak deep and true to a heart; a mind to a mind; a soul to a soul; wisdom to the wise and religion to the pious. There must be in the Bible, mind, heart and soul, wisdom and religion. Were it otherwise how

could millions find it their lawgiver, friend and prophet? Some of the greatest of human institutions seem built on the Bible; such things will not stand on heaps of chaff but on mountains of rock."[2]

Is anything short of Inspiration an adequate explanation of the existence of such a book? If it were lost, and its teachings all forgotten could any one or all of the most intellectual, wise and learned men in all the earth make another book like it?

In answer to such questions said Rousseau: "I confess that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers; with all their pomp of diction, how mean, how contemptible, are they compared with the Scriptures. Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred Personage whose history it contains should be himself a mere man? . . . Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ.

[2] "Discourse of Religion," Boston edition 1843, pages 317-320.

Such a supposition in fact only shifts the difficulty without obviating it; it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel; the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing man than the hero."[3]

"The centuries come and go; times and seasons change; institutions rise and fall; civilizations grow old and perish, but this Book liveth and abideth forever. It leads humanity onward and upward, and at each stage of progress points to better things to come. It is indeed a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path of the toiling millions who seek to know that which is highest and best. What shall we say concerning such a marvelous volume? Is it not the Book of God."[4]

If it is not, there is not now, there never was, and there never will be, a book of God in our world. Its loss would be the greatest calamity that could befall mankind, as its universal acceptance would be the greatest blessing.

[3] Quoted in "Watson's Institutes," Part I., page 130.
[4] Rev. J. E. Gilbert in an address published in "The Inspired Word," page 207.

XIV

CONCLUSION.

"Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."—*St. John in the Revelation.*

"I am a stranger in the earth; hide not thy commandments from me."—*Psalmist.*

"To the Bible men will return; and why? Because they can not do without it. Because happiness is our being's end and aim, and happiness belongs to righteousness, and righteousness is revealed in the Bible. For this simple reason, men will return to the Bible, just as a man who tried to give up food, thinking it was a vain thing, and he could do without it, would return to food; or a man who tried to give up sleep, thinking it was a vain thing, and he could do without it, would return to sleep."—*Matthew Arnold.*

"His Sermon on the Mount is unequalled, and whatever be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."—*Renan.*

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."—*St. Peter.*

"I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise."—*St. Paul.*

XIV

Conclusion.

Our search is ended. Many of the evidences by which Christianity attests its divine authority at the bar of human reason have been passed in review before us. Logical processes applied to unquestionable facts and established testimonies have led us to conclusions in which reasonable minds can rest. We have seen that if the existence of God is assumed the logical presumption of the hypothesis leads to belief in the existence of a divine revelation. The very conception of a God, considered in connection with the undying wants of mankind, forces the conclusion that if a God exists he has somewhere and some-when granted to his sinful, suffering and bewildered child a revelation from above, and that such a revelation must be recorded in the best form for constant appeal and perpetual preservation—a book. Turning then to seek evidences of the Divine Existence we have found footprints of Deity all over the entire surface of the universe. Advancing from the observation of the created universe to the consideration of human history, we have been convinced that if the God of nature has ever been

visibly manifest in Person among men he appeared in Jesus. In him we have discerned such superhuman features as forbid us to classify him with men. He was in the world but not of it. No imagination of man could have invented him, and nothing short of a divine personality could have maintained his sinless nature, or have uttered his sublime words. We have followed him through his unparalleled life and have seen him laid in the sepulchre, only to rise again and establish in the world a faith and a church as unearthly as himself. We have found the history of all ages looking towards him as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master. We have identified him as the Son of Man and lo! that very fact has shown him to be also the Son of God. We have come upon the books in which we anticipated the revelation of God would be found recorded somewhere in our world. We have discovered books attested and inspired by this divine Person. They have reached us from afar, it is true; but they have been preserved with unparalleled care and they have reached us substantially as they were when originally received by the men of old to whom they were first given. Through them we sit again, as did the ancients at the feet of the Attester and Inspirer of these books, astonished and enthralled by the gra-

cious words which proceed out of his mouth. His words penetrate to the deepest depths of our souls, as if they were living and ominiscient beings before whom our secret thoughts were laid open and fully exposed to view. They follow us in whatsoever direction we move, like the eyes of a well wrought picture of Him. An unearthly light falls upon us from them. Under the influence of this light a new life within us springs up. Yielding to this light and trusting Him we lose the sense of guilt which has long been on us and the spell of sin is broken. The quality of the life we thus derive from him is as that which might pulsate to us from one who had been loosed from the pains of death because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. It seems to be of a deathless type. He becomes to us thus the hope of glory. He introduces us to a supramundane world. Angels of prayer and peace ascend and descend upon Him.

We have no hope of finding any other or any better light. This is the best revelation of God we can ever hope to obtain, unless He shall come again. What shall we do with it?

First, let us dismiss our doubts and fears. We have found the truth; now let us accept it unfalteringly. We have not made this search for the pleasure of a mere excursion. Sincere

and serious minds can not seek truth in that spirit. He but trifles, boastfully, in vain and swelling words, who says: "Did the Almighty, holding in his right hand Truth and in his left Search After Truth, deign to proffer me the one I should request Search After Truth."[1] The quest for Truth is not the cruise of a pleasure boat but the voyage of a merchantman seeking goodly pearls until one be found worth all the world beside. It is such a treasure we have found in Him, "in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge." (Colossians ii. 3.) He who came unto the world to bear witness to the Truth has given us the Living Truth. His words are final. "Christ no after age shall e'er outgrow."[2]

Here we may rest secure and confident.

But if any shall charge that we, desperately needing light, have been too ready to accept His guidance, that we have scrutinized His credentials with a too friendly eye, that upon insufficient evidence we have believed Him to be God, that too hastily we have received His words as a revelation from heaven, we reply, what better can we, or they, do? If not to Him, to whom shall we go for the words of Eternal life? If He is not God, and if He who is God has allowed this mighty and plausible deception of Chris-

[1] Lessing. [2] John Campbell Shairp.

tianity to go so long unexposed—nay rather, has granted to it such providential confirmations —he can not blame us for falling victims to it. When therefore we shall come before Him in judgment he can not justly find fault with us for following Jesus and the Book—the best light our world ever had, or ever can hope to have. No speechless God of heartless, silent nature can upbraid us for being Christians.

"If Jesus Christ is a man—
And only a man—I say
That of all mankind I cleave to Him,
And to Him will I cleave alway.

If Jesus Christ is a God—
And the only God—I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea and the air."[3]

Second, we must as speedily as possible give this truth to all other men. Our obligation to propagate the Truth is limited only by the number of men in the world who need it, and by our ability to reach them with that Light which has come to us. The possession of a revelation by any man imposes upon him the most solemn obligation to give it to others. It would be a heartless God—an apotheosized monster—a deified Demon, who would leave such a creature as man in a world like ours without the very

[3]Richard Watson Gilder's "Song of a Heathen Sojourning in Galilee A. D. 32."

best light such a being could use. But we have seen that the best which can be done for man in the matter of a revelation is for God to reveal the truth to some men, and lay upon them the duty of carrying it to all other men. As therefore the prophet who should suppress the inspired words sent to him and choke them back in his throat, when other men were dying to hear them, would deserve the anathemas of the race, so also nigh unto cursing is that people to whom the word has come after the prophet has spoken it, but who refuse to pass it on to all who have not heard it!

And how this dark inhumanity deepens in blackness when put in contrast alongside the revelation of ineffable love which has come to us in Christ. We have revealed before us a Crucified Saviour as the heart of history and the Lord of the Universe. Jesus has shown us the Father—yea, and revealed in Him depths of love, which the heart of man never imagined were in the Father. The God of Nature in his kindliest moods never suggested that any room was left to man for repentance, or any place for forgiveness. This birthright of redemption, which the unevangelized nations have bartered away for idols, and then have sought in vain to recover with bitter tears and bleeding sacrifices, the Voice of Nature declares to them

is lost irreparably. But Jesus has come to us preaching the privilege of repentance and revealing the hope of pardon. In Him the Supernatural has spoken setting aside the decrees of the Natural. In Him we discover that the heart of the universe is not inflexible Power but redeeming Love. An inspired man has told us that "all things were created by Him and for Him." (Colossians i. 16.) And the Apostle, who leaned on his bosom at the Supper, and who met him again in the weary days of the Patmos exile, has informed us that, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." (John i. 1, 2, 3.) It was then his pierced hand that fashioned the world. Creative and Redemptive Love went out together with this Son of the Morning. But alas! men did not know it. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." The delirium of sin led men to mistake him for a Terror. And ah! how long the consuming fever has raged and the dark night has lingered, while some have watched and waited with breaking hearts for His coming, as they who watch for the morning!

But we know him, for his word came to us

years ago, and he has been a long time with us. Shall we longer withhold from a dying world this Love Secret of the Skies? We sing:

"I know thee Saviour, who thou art—
Jesus, the feeble sinner's friend;
Nor wilt thou with the night depart,
But stay and love me to the end.
Thy mercies never shall remove,
Thy nature and thy name is Love."[4]

Wherefore O follower of the Christ, who is revealed in the Scriptures, wherever these lines overtake you,

"I say to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street,—

That he, and we, and all men, move
Under a canopy of love
As broad as the blue sky above;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, are all shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain;

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led,

Yet if we will our Guide obey
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day;

And we on divers shores now cast
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past
All in our Father's house at last."[5]

[4]Charles Wesley's "Wrestling Jacob."
[5]Richard Chenevix Trench's "The Kingdom of God."

INDEX

Andrews, President E. B., quoted on the covenant between Art, Literature, Science and Religion, 173.

Apocrypha never quoted by Christ, 153.

Apologists—Older writers assume too much, while the modern writers concede too much, 3, 4.

Arnold, Matthew, quoted, 242.

Augustine, St., quoted, 176.

Bacon, Lord, quoted, 10, 30.

Baur on the genuineness of the Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians and Romans, 74.

Beet, Dr. Joseph Agar—His examination of the theory that the Resurrection was a delusion, 99-103.

Ben Hur referred to, 193.

Bible: The only sacred book containing epistles, 75, note; Dr. C. A. Briggs quoted concerning, 194, 195; His quotation examined, 195; Its purity uncorrupted, 224; Its truths final, 233; Not a system of science, 232; Carlyle on, 237; Rousseau on, 239; Theodore Parker on, 238.

Bismarck, Prince — His contest with Pius IX. referred to, 75.

Bloody Sacrifices universally believed in, 136.

Briggs, Dr. C. A., quoted on inspiration of the Bible, 194, 195.

Buckle, Thomas, quoted, 206.

Bushnell, Horace, on serenity and patience of Jesus, 63, 64; on world changed by Jesus, 124, 135, 147, 148.

Cairns, Principal, on central position of the person of Christ, 7; on New Testament, 178.

Carlyle, Thomas, on the Bible, 237.

Cato quoted, 30.

Chalmers, Dr. Thomas, on the hypothesis of a revelation, 12.

Chambers, Dr. Talbot W., on the Canon of the New Testament, 198.

Channing, Dr. William E., on the character of Christ as a proof of divinity, 64.

Christ: Key to the struggle between Faith and Doubt, 7; Character of, 43; Lecky and Mill

quoted concerning, 44; Horace Bushnell on, 45, 61; Integrity of the character of, in the Gospels, 49; His supernatural sayings, 49; Could not have been the product of His age, 51; Not the creation of the Evangelists, 52; His personal attitude towards God and Man, Bushnell quoted concerning, 61; His humanity attests His divinity, 66; Supreme importance of His resurrection, 72, 73; Anticipated in history, literature and religion of the Hebrew nation, 129, 139; The fulfillment of the past and hope of the future, 145; Exposing Error and defending Truth, 152; Attests the Old Testament, 153, 174.

Christianity the only religion which appeals to Reason, 11; Insists on the Reason, 11; Reason to be used reasonably in examining credentials of, 12; Its credentials, not its contents, to be passed on, 12; Forces of, and their argument, 53; Prebendary Row on force of the argument from results of, 53; Effects of, inexplicable unless Christ has risen, 94, 95; Claim of fulfilling the past peculiar to, 133.

Clerk-Maxwell, Professor, on matter not Self-existent and Eternal, 34.

Clement of Alexandria, on genuineness of the Gospels, 111.

Clement, of Rome, 114, 119.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, quoted, 213.

Critics, the Higher—Their view of "the intellectual fallibility" of Christ, 169-171; An examination of them, 171-174, 214-218.

Dale, Dr. R. W. "The Gospels can not be substituted," 117.

Deism—Its banished God, 21.

Ellicott, Bishop C. J., on the Incarnation, 4.

Emanuel, Victor—His entrance into Rome, 75.

Epistles, The: Value of, as historical documents, 76; Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians "uncontested and incontestable," 74.

Erasmus—His text of the New Testament, 221-223.

Fernley Lecture, The (1889), on the Resurrection, 99-103.

Flint, Professor, on matter neither Eternal nor Self-existent, 34.

Gaussen, Dr., quoted on inspiration of the Scriptures, 181-184; quoted, 150.

Gibbon—His inadequate explanation of the early success of Christianity examined, 95.
Gilder, Richard Watson, quoted, 247.
God: Three possible hypotheses concerning, 19; Doctrine of His self-existence a necessity of Thought — Prof. Flint quoted, 35; As First Cause He must be a Free Cause, 36; Not intermittent in His manifestations, 129; Universal belief in His existence, 136; Plutarch quoted thereon, 136.
Gospels, The Four: Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Papias, quoted on genuineness of, 113; Could not have been displaced by spurious gospels, 117, 118; Internal evidence of their inspiration, 118-121.
Green, Dr. William Henry, on preservation of Old Testament, 212.

Haygood, Bishop Atticus G., quoted on character of Christ, 51; on "mythical theory," 53.
Herschel, Sir John, quoted, 208.
History: Contemporaneous of the time of Christ, 141, 142; Testimony of modern to Christ, 143, 145, 147, 148.
Hodge, Dr. Charles, quoted, 176.

Incarnation, The: Discussed, 45; Established as a matter of fact, its possibility is not debatable, 41; Hope of, universal among all nations, 136.
Irenaeus on genuineness of the Gospels, 110.

Jacobi quoted, 40.
John the Baptist referred to, 141.
Josephus, Flavius, on Old Testament, 177, 220.
Justin Martyr on genuineness of the Gospels, 111.

Leavitt, John McDowell, quoted, 2.
Lecky, W. E. H., on the perfection of Jesus, 44; his explanation of the early triumph of Christianity examined, 96.
Lequinia quoted, 58.
Lessing quoted, 246.
Lias, Prof. J. J., on the "Higher Critics," 217; quoted, 208.
Liddon, Canon H. P., on the probability of a revelation, 20; on self-existence of God, 38; on sincerity of Christ, 66; his reply to Gibbon's explanation of the early victories of Christianity, quoted, 18.

Literary Work, slow circulation of, before invention of printing, 108.
Locke, John, quoted, 228.
Luthardt—His generalization on the mutual attraction of God and Man, 136; quoted, 58.
Luther, Martin, quoted, 90.

Matter and Mind: Three explanations of their existence, 31; Origin of in time, 32, 34; Self-existence of them unthinkable, 35.
Mill, John Stuart, on the perfection of Jesus, 44.
Milligan, Dr. William, concerning the New Testament text of Erasmus, 221, 222.
"Mythical Theory": Prebendary Row concerning, 53; Bishop A. G. Haygood on, 53; Dr. Henry Van Dyke on, 54, 55.

Napoleon the Great—Testimony to Christ, 145-147.
Neander on tone of New Testament writings, 205.
Newman, John Henry, remarked upon, 6.
Newton, Sir Isaac, quoted, 208.
New Testament: Principal Cairns concerning, 178; Gaussen on necessity of, 181; Gaussen on authority, 184, 185; Canon of, is established by evidence and not fixed by councils, 194-196; rapid circulation of its books in Apostolic age, 196; "Apostolic Fathers" quoted concerning, 199; Internal evidence of its inspiration, 205; Preserved not by miracle but by Providence, 211; Greek manuscripts of, 219-221; Tischendorff quoted concerning, 223; Origen quoted concerning, 201.

Old Testament: Divine authority of, attested by Jesus Christ, 149-174; Quoted by St. Peter at the Pentecost, 164; Quoted by the Martyr Stephen, 165; Testimony of Josephus to, 177-220; Guarded by Four Majestic Figures, 211.
Origen quoted concerning the New Testament, 201.

Pantheism—Its God "only a fine name for the universe," 21.
Parker, Theodore, quoted concerning the Bible, 238; quoted, 40.
Pascal, Blaise—His *Pensées* referred to, 3; quoted, 10, 126, 151.
Pierson, A. T., quoted, 228.
Pius IX.—Contest with Prince Bismarck, 75.
Plutarch on the universal

belief in the existence of God, 136; on Lycurgus, 179.

Quo Vadis referred to, 193.

Reason, The: Limitations of, 13; May apply general tests of natural theology to a revelation, 13; The threefold office of, 14.
Renan, M., declares Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians and the Corinthians "uncontested and incontestable," 74; quoted, 126, 242.
Resurrection of Jesus: Supreme importance of, 72, 73; Argument for, drawn from Epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Corinthians, 76-80; Alternatives concerning, 80; These alternatives examined, 81-88; The Church reconstructed upon belief of it, 91; Forbids His classification with men, 151.
Reuss, E. G. E., quoted, 150.
Row, Prebendary C. A., quoted, 53, 70, 80.

Sayce, Professor, on the "Higher Critics," 217.
Shairp, John, quoted, 246.
South, Dr. Robert, quoted, 106.
Standpoint of this Work set forth, 8.
Summers, Dr. Thomas O., on necessity of a written revelation, 27; on testimony to the Canon of the New Testament found in the Patristic writings, 200, 201.

Tatian — His "*Diatessaron*," 200.
Tertullian on genuineness of the Gospels, 111.
Tischendorff on New Testament, 223.
Trench, Richard C., quoted, 250.
Tyndale, William, quoted, 166.

Van Dyke, Dr. Henry, on "Mythical theory," 55.
Van Oosterzee quoted 176.
Visions: The "theory of visions" as set forth by Renan and others to account for the belief in the Resurrection, 85; Conditions necessary to such hallucinations, 86.

Wace, Rev. Henry, on the "Higher Critics," 192.
Watson, Richard, on hypothesis of a revelation, 12.
Wesley, Charles, quoted, 250.
Wilson, Bishop Alpheus W., on the Canon of New Testament not a miracle, 210; on the security of the Bible, 225.

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